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Heroes of the Nations

EDITED BY

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FACTA DUCIS VIVENT, OPEROSAQUE GLORIA RERUM. — OVID, IN LIVIAM 265.

THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON FAME SHALL LIVE.

# HENRY V.



HENRY V.

# HENRY V.

## THE TYPICAL MEDIÆVAL HERO

BY

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# PREFACE

THIS volume had its original in an article contributed to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, but is founded on a fresh study of the chief authorities. If I cannot claim to have exhausted all sources of information, I have nevertheless sought throughout to base my narrative on chronicles and documents of contemporary, or nearly contemporary date.

For few periods of our mediæval history is there more abundant material. At least three lives of Henry V. were written within twenty years of his death. Of these the most valuable, so far as it extends, is the *Gesta Regis Henrici Quinti*, which was the work of a chaplain in the royal service. Mr. Williams, in his edition of the *Gesta*, suggested that the author was one Jean Bordin, a native of Aquitaine, who is known to have been present as one of Henry's chaplains in the campaign of Agincourt. This ascription is, however, purely conjectural, and Dr. Lenz has argued that in the *Gesta* we possess the genuine prose *Life of Henry V.* composed by Thomas Elmham, prior of Lenton. But we have no evidence that Elmham was ever in Henry's own service. Nor can any safe conclusion be drawn from points of similarity between the *Gesta* and the *Liber*

1334364

*Metricus* (Elmham's undoubted work); since the *Gesta* appears to be the original (down to 1416) of the principal narratives composed in England. A better claim might perhaps be made for Thomas Rudborn, afterwards bishop of St. David's, who was one of Henry's chaplains and is credited with a history of his master's reign. Whilst the authorship of the *Gesta* is uncertain, of its value there can be no question. It is the vivid narrative of an eye-witness who had access to official records,* and is our best authority for the first four years of Henry's reign.

Next in importance to the *Gesta* comes the prose *Vita Henrici Quinti*, which passes under the name of Thomas Elmham. This ascription is due to Hearne as editor of the only printed edition; it is, however, almost certainly erroneous. Elmham himself says expressly that his prose *Life* was written before the *Liber Metricus*, whilst the latter work appears to have been composed during Henry's lifetime.† But the *Vita* published by Hearne, was probably not written till fifteen years later. From internal evidence it would appear that the author of the *Vita* had been in the service of the Earl of Warwick, whom he accompanied to Provins in March, 1419; that he wrote his narrative after the breach with Philip of Burgundy in 1435; and that he was a supporter in politics of Humphrey of Gloucester.‡

**Gesta*, pp. 10, 47, 51.

† *Liber Metricus*, pp. 79, 80.

‡ *Vita*, pp. 215, 281, 283; *cf.* pp. 282, 312, 319 below. Note also the prominence given to Warwick and Duke Humphrey, and the long account of the latter's siege of Cherbourg. I have, however, for convenience quoted this Life as "Elmham, *Vita*."

From the last chapter of the *Vita* we learn that the author was an intimate friend of John Somerset, a court physician under Henry VI., and an adherent of Duke Humphrey. The *Vita* is marred by its grandiloquent and turgid style; but after the *Gesta* fails us it becomes the leading authority on the English side. In its earlier portion it borrows much from the *Gesta;* afterwards the author had his own and his patrons' recollections to depend upon; he may also have been acquainted with an early edition of Monstrelet.

Very similar to "Elmham's" *Vita* in substance, though shorter and simpler in style, is the *Life* compiled by Titus Livius de Frulovisiis, an Italian in the service of Humphrey of Gloucester. Titus Livius based his *Life* either on "Elmham," or on the same authorities as those made use of by that writer, but with occasional additions.

An abbreviation—as it would seem—of "Elmham" was printed by Mr. Williams as a continuation of the *Gesta.* This last narrative is free from the faults of style, which disfigure the longer *Vita*, and curiously in one or two places contains certain small details which are given by Livius but not by "Elmham."* The exact relationship of these three narratives to one another and to the *Gesta* could perhaps be determined only by a minute comparison of the numerous manuscripts.

Of altogether minor importance are Elmham's authentic *Liber Metricus*, and the *Versus Rhythmici* (of uncertain authorship) two brief rhyming Latin

*Cf. *Gesta*, p. 131, note.

chronicles contained in Cole's *Memorials of Henry V.* The *Life* by Robert Redmayne, which is printed in this same collection, belongs to a different category; the writer lived in the reign of Henry VIII., and as an authority this *Life* must be classed with the histories of Hall and Holinshed.

Of general Latin chronicles, other than set biographies, the chief on the English side are the *Historia Anglicana* of Thomas Walsingham, and the *Chronicle* of Thomas Otterbourne, which though brief are occasionally useful.

Of greater value and interest are the English Chronicles. For the first time in English history a narrative written in English speech for popular use takes rank as a leading contemporary authority. The English Chronicles of the reign of Henry V. fall into two classes. The first class comprises more or less varying versions of the *Brut*, or history of Britain, which in one form became as *Caxton's Chronicle*, the earliest of English printed histories. The widespread popularity of this chronicle is shown by the great number of manuscripts which still exist. In one group of manuscripts the narrative ends with the capture of Rouen in January, 1419; and down to this point there seems to be no great variety in the different versions. This date no doubt marks the appearance of the original edition, to which continuations were afterwards added by various hands. The *Brut* or *English Chronicle* is strictly contemporary; much of the earlier narrative is derived from the *Gesta*, but the official account is supplemented by legends and stories adapted to the popular taste.

Again and again the prose chronicle paraphrases thinly some current ballad of the day, such as that which tells how King Henry played at tennis with his hard gunstones. It is by the happiest accident of all that some manuscripts have preserved at length John Page's tale in verse of how he lay at Rouen siege with the King; with Page's rude but graphic account no more pretentious narrative can compete.*

The second class of English Chronicles are those composed by or for London citizens, which give under each mayoralty a brief notice of the chief events of the year. The best-known of these are the *Chronicle of London*, edited by Sir N. Harris Nicolas in 1827, and the so-called *Gregory's Chronicle* published by Mr. James Gairdner in his *Collections of a London Citizen*. These two chronicles, with a good deal in common, present considerable variations. To this same class belongs the *Chronicle* in Cotton. MS., Cleopatra, C. iv., which, however, for the two years 1415 and 1416 is of altogether exceptional importance. To it we owe the Ballad of Agincourt printed in Wright's *Political Poems and Songs*, ii., 123–127, and our most detailed account of the naval warfare and negotiations of the following year.† The early portion seems to be the work of a contemporary, but with Henry's second expedition the handwriting of the manuscript changes, and the latter part is of inferior interest.

* Down to 1419 I have used principally the Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., and afterwards also Harley MS. 2256. The *English Chronicle*, edited by Mr. S. Davies for the Camden Society, belongs to this class.

† See especially the curious passage quoted on page 171 below.

To the class of London Chronicles belongs also the later work of Fabyan (*d.* 1413), who, like Hall, Holinshed and other writers of the sixteenth century, may have preserved some legends and other material of which the originals have now perished.

Amongst English writers of contemporary date reference must also be made to John Hardyng, the north-country champion of the Percies and Umfravilles.

Foremost amongst the authorities on the French side is the great group of Burgundian chroniclers, Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Jean Le Févre de St. Rémy and Jehan Waurin, who wrote in a kind of collaboration, borrowing freely from one another. However, down to 1422 Monstrelet is entitled to be regarded as the original and principal of the three. St. Rémy, writing after Monstrelet's death, supplemented the material which he had furnished to his predecessor from his own recollections; he had been present at Agincourt on the English side, and his narrative of the campaign of 1415 ranks as the best account after that in the *Gesta*. Waurin's *Chronicle* has for our period no independent value. The *Chronicle* of Georges Chastelain, another Burgundian, is in its matter closely akin to that of Monstrelet; but the writer's personality and political insight give it a peculiar importance.

Of other French authorities, the *Chronique du Religieux de St. Denys* presents the official view of the Court. Jean Juvenal des Ursins is interesting as one who was originally Burgundian but turned Armagnac after the Treaty of Troyes. Of more occasional value are the *Gestes des Nobles* of Guillaume

Cousinot (who was a confidential servant of the Orleanist princes), the *Chronique Normande* of Pierre Cochon (apparently a resident at Rouen during the English occupation), the *Memoires* of Pierre de Fenin (who was chamberlain to Charles VI.), the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris* and the anonymous *Chronique de Normandie* printed with the *Gesta*.

No complete Calendars of the Patent Rolls of Henry V. have yet appeared. But the large number of state papers belonging to the reign, which are contained in Rymer's *Fœdera*,* go far to supply the deficiency. The *Roll of Normandy* for 1417 is printed at length in Hardy's *Rotuli Normanniæ*. Calendars of the Norman Rolls and of the French Rolls are given in the *Reports of the Deputy-Keeper of Public Records* (Nos. 41, 42 and 44). The *Rolls of Parliament* and Nicolas' *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council* complete the list of official records. Documents of a less formal character are to be found in Sir Henry Ellis' three series of *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, and in Delpit's *Documents Français en Angleterre*. Letters written in native English instead of French or Latin now for a first time take a place amongst historical authorities and are of peculiar interest. The writers include not only Henry himself and other great personages, but humble individuals, like Johan Ofort, who sent private news of the war to their friends in England.†

* The whole of volume ix. and volume x., 1–257.

† Cf. *Fœdera*, ix, 779, 911. Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd ser., 1, 77. See pages 281, 287 and 309 below.

In addition to original authorities I have used freely the works of modern writers. Mr. Wylie's *History of England under Henry IV.*, and Sir James Ramsay's *Lancaster and York* have been of constant service. To Dr. Stubbs I owe, as I needs must, much more than my sub-title. Thomas Goodwin's *History of the Reign of Henry the Fifth* will always preserve its value as a storehouse of information. My obligations of a less general kind are all, I hope, acknowledged in their proper place.

C. L. K.

May, 1901.

# CONTENTS


PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . v

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . xvii

LIST OF PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES . . . . xxix

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1

CHAPTER II

HENRY'S BOYHOOD, 1387–1399. . . . . 12

CHAPTER III

TROUBLES OF THE NEW REIGN, 1399–1402 . . 21

CHAPTER IV

THE PERCIES AND OWEN GLENDOWER, 1403–1408 . 35

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCE AND THE COUNCIL, 1406–1413 . . 59

CHAPTER VI

HENRY OF MONMOUTH AND POPULAR TRADITION . 80

CHAPTER VII

THE RESTORATION OF DOMESTIC PEACE, 1413–1414. 94

PAGE

CHAPTER VIII

THREATENINGS OF WAR, 1413–1415 . . . 109

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST INVASION OF FRANCE, 1415 . . . 126

CHAPTER X

AGINCOURT, 25TH OCT., 1415 . . . . . 144

CHAPTER XI

HENRY V. AND SIGISMUND, 1415–1416 . . . 161

CHAPTER XII

THE COMMAND OF THE SEA, 1416–1417 . . . 179

CHAPTER XIII

MILITARY PREPARATIONS, 1417 . . . . 194

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONQUEST OF LOWER NORMANDY, 1417–1418 . 212

CHAPTER XV

THE SIEGE OF ROUEN, 1418–1419 . . . . 234

CHAPTER XVI

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH, 1414–1418. . . 258

CHAPTER XVII

THE BRIDGE OF MONTEREAU, 1419 . . . . 278

CHAPTER XVIII

THE TREATY OF TROYES, 1419–1420 . . . 295

CHAPTER XIX

THE HEIR OF FRANCE, 1420–1421 . . . . 309

PAGE

CHAPTER XX

THE STATE OF ENGLAND . . . . . 323

CHAPTER XXI

HENRY IN ENGLAND, 1421 . . . . . 343

CHAPTER XXII

THE LAST CAMPAIGN, 1421–1422 . . . . . 352

CHAPTER XXIII

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE . . . . . 363

CHAPTER XXIV

BOIS DE VINCENNES, 1422 . . . . . 377

CHAPTER XXV

CONCLUSION . . . . . 389

INDEX . . . . . 403

# DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

1. HENRY V. . . . . *Frontispiece*

This portrait is after one in the royal collection at Windsor Castle, which appears to have belonged to the Crown as far back as the reign of Henry VIII. There are very similar portraits in the National Portrait Gallery, at Eton, and at Queen's College, Oxford. In essentials they agree well with the description on page 81.

2. HENRY OF MONMOUTH KNIGHTED BY KING RICHARD . . . . . 16

This is from a miniature in Harley MS., 1319, in the British Museum, which contains the account by Jean Creton of the last year of the reign of Richard II. Creton was an eye-witness of the events which he describes; his narrative was written in 1401, and the miniatures which illustrate the British Museum manuscript are perhaps of not much later date. Creton's description of the knighting of Henry of Monmouth is given in the text.

3. THE PARLIAMENT OF 1399 . . . . . 18

This illustration comes from the same source as the preceding one. The throne, covered with cloth of gold, is left unoccupied as described in the text. On the right hand are seated the spiritual lords; on the left are the temporal lords, nearest of whom to the throne is Henry of Lancaster (wearing a tall fur cap).

PAGE

4. OWEN GLENDOWER, FROM HIS SEAL . . 32

5. THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY . . . . 44
"Here shewes how at the batell of Shrewesbury, between kyng Henry the Fourth and Sir Henry Percy, erle Richard there beyng on the kynges party ful notably and manly behaved hymself to his great laude and worship." *

6. A BATTLE WITH THE WELSH . . . . 52
"Here shewes howe at theis daies appeared a blasyng sterre called *Stella Comata*, which after the seiyng of Clerkys, signyfied great deth and blodeshede; and sone upon beganne the warre of Wales, by Owen of Glendour their chief capteyn; whom amongs other erle Richard so sore sewed, that he had nere hande taken hym, and put hym to flyght, and toke his baner, and moche of his peple and his banerer."
The comet is the one which appeared in the spring of 1402.

7. HENRY IV. . . . . 60
From his tomb in the Chapel of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

8. CHIEF JUSTICE GASCOIGNE . . . . 90
From an altar tomb in Harwood Church, Yorkshire. His second wife Joan, daughter of Sir William Pickering, is there figured by his side.

9. CORONATION OF HENRY V. . . . . 94
From a bas-relief on the north side of the Chantry in Westminster Abbey.

10. HENRY V. AND HIS COUNCIL . . . . 104
"Here sheweth howe this victorious and noble kyng Henry the Fifth opened this matier [the Lollard insur-

* This description and those for plates 6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24 are quoted from the life of the Earl of Warwick by John Rous or Ross in Cotton. MS., Julius E., iv., from the drawings in which these illustrations are copied. Rous was chaplain of the chantry at Guy's Cliff near Warwick from 1445 to 1491.

PAGE

rection] to the lordes of his counseil, erle Richard being present, which for the accomplyshment of the kyng's entent and pleasir therin, dressed hymself into his harneys, and ful coragiously, with good circumspeccion and forsight, avaunced hymself to the subdewyng of the said traytours and heretiks."

11. HENRY V., FROM A CONTEMPORARY MINIATURE 120

This represents Jean de Galopes, dean of St. Lo in Normandy, presenting his translation of St. Bonaventure's *Life of Christ* to the King. Henry wears a scarlet gown lined with ermine, and is seated under a blue canopy powdered with golden SS. (perhaps these stand for *Soverayne*, as on the tomb of Henry IV. at Canterbury). The volume is now at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge ; at the end in a hand of the sixteenth century is the note : " This wass sumtyme Kinge Henri the Fifeth his booke."

12. MICHAEL, EARL OF SUFFOLK . . . . 130

This is Michael de la Pole, second Earl of Suffolk, who died before Harfleur on 18th September, 1415, and was buried at Wingfield, Suffolk. His eldest son Michael, the third Earl, was killed at Agincourt. William, his second son and the fourth Earl, who was Admiral of Normandy, was the noble Duke of Suffolk, who was so foully murdered in 1450.

13. MEN-AT-ARMS FIGHTING . . . . . 152

From a miniature in a *Hystoire des Roys de France*, contained in Royal MS., 20 C., vii. in the British Museum, which was executed in the early part of the fifteenth century.

14. HALLAM AND THE EARL OF WARWICK SENT AMBASSADORS TO CONSTANCE . . . 166

" Here shewes howe kyng Henry the Fifth made erle Richard and Robert Halam, bishop of Salisbury, with other worshipful persones, his ambassiatours to the general counsell of Constance."

PAGE

15. THE EARL OF WARWICK AND SIGISMUND . 168

"Howe the emperour for a special love made the erle to bear his swerde, and proferred to geve hym Seynte George hys Hert, Englishmennes avowry, to bryng into Englond; but Erle Richard heryng the emperour sey that he in his owne persone would come into Englond: he by endenture restored hit to hym agayne, saying the deliveryng of hit by his owne persone shulde be more acceptable, and nourisshyng of more love, and so he did; for in shorte space after he come into Englond, and was made knyghte of the garter, and offered up the holy Hert hymself, which is worshipfully yet kept at Wyndesore; and in his comyng and going at Caleys, erle Richard then beyng capteyn, he honourably resceived hym, and the emperour saide to the kyng that no prince cristen for wisdom, norture and manhode, hadde such another knyght as he had of therle Warrewyk; addyng thereto that if al curtesye were lost, yet myght hit be founde ageyn in hym; and so ever after by the emperour's auctorite he was called the Fadre of Curteisy."

16. A FIGHT AT SEA . . . . . 184

"Howe erle Richard in his comyng into Englond, wanne two greete carykes in the sea."

Nothing is known about this incident. The illustration shows the Beauchamp arms on the sail, and the Earl's badge (the Bear and the Ragged Staff) with the St. George's cross on the pennant. The English ship has archers with longbows, the Genoese (or French) has crossbowmen. In the *Heralds' Debate*, p. 57, the naval success of the French at a later period of the war is thus explained:

"You have solely archers on board, and an archer can only kill at sea when he is on the upper deck of the ship, and is in great danger to himself; and so he cannot take good aim, in consequence both of his fear and of the motion of the vessel. This is different with the French, for they make use of the crossbow, and a crossbowman can shoot under cover from the forecastle or sterncastle

PAGE

without danger or peril; and even in his doublet and through a small hole he can kill or wound his enemy, since however great may be his fear or the motion of the vessel, the crossbow will give force to his arrow. Hence it is seen that a French ship at sea always defeats an English ship of the same size."

The last sentence does not hold good for the reign of Henry V. But in the illustration the crossbowmen do appear to be better protected; in naval engagements at close-quarters the superior range of the longbow was of no advantage.

17. A SHIP OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY . . 190

"Here showes how good provision made of English clothe and other thynges necessary and licence had of the Kynge, erle Richard sailed towards the Holy Lond; and specially to the holy city of Jerusalem where our Lord Jhesus Criste wilfully suffered his bitter passion for the redemption of all mankynde."

The illustration shows the high poop well, and also, though less clearly, the forecastle. Four guns can be seen in the waist of the ship. The sail and pennant are decorated with the Warwick arms and badge as in the previous illustration. It was in 1408 that Earl Richard went to Palestine, travelling through France and Lombardy to Venice, where he took ship. On his way home he visited Lithuania and Germany, and reached England in 1410.

18. THE SIEGE OF DOMFRONT . . . . 224

"How erle Richard in the warres of France toke Denfront, and entred first into Cane; but inasmoche as he was there with and under lorde Thomas duke of Clarance,* the kyng's next brother, he sette on the wallys the kyng's armys and the duke's, and made a crye, 'a Clarance! a Clarance!' And then entred the duke, and gave the erle many greet thankes. After the erle beseged Caubek on the water of Sayn, and they appoynted to stande undre the Fourme of Reone."

The ship in the left-hand corner suggests that this illus-

PAGE

trates the siege of Caudebec, as well as that of Domfront. The "trunk" on which the great gun is mounted (see p. 204) is well shown; so also are the "pavises" used by the crossbowmen.

19. THE SIEGE OF ROUEN . . . . . 246

"Howe erle Richard was atte the sege of Reon, there set first between the kyng's tent and Seynt Katheryns, and when Seynt Katheryns was wonne he was sette to kepe Port Martenvyle."

The earl figures twice in this illustration. On the right hand he is leaving his tent; on the left he is kneeling before Henry. Both earl and king wear surcoats, and both carry battle-axes. The cannon are shewn on their trunks in the fortified lines. The palisade drawn by the artist may be supposed to represent Sir Robert Babthorp's earthworks topped with a thorn hedge and row of stakes (see page 243).

20. THE EARL OF WARWICK AND ROBERT HALLAM RECEIVED BY POPE JOHN XXIII. . . . 260

"Howe the pope and the clergy, the emperour Sygismonde, and the temporalte honourably and honestly did receive them."

The pope is seated under a canopy, with three cardinals on his right hand; Sigismund stands on his left, wearing the triple crown of Hungary, as in Plate 15.

21. ARCHBISHOP CHICHELE . . . . . 274

From his tomb in the choir at Canterbury Cathedral.

22. THE EARL OF WARWICK FIGHTS WITH THE FRENCH . . . . . 282

"Howe the dolphyn of Fraunce leide in the way 6000 men of armes, with the erles of Vandom and Lymosyn; and both the French erles were slayn, and 2000 of his men taken and slayn; all the other put to flight; and erle Richard slewe oon the said erles with his owne handes."

Neither Elmham (*Vita*, pp. 214, 215) nor Monstrelet (p. 451) make any reference to the two French earls—the Counts of Vendôme and Limoges.

PAGE

23. THE EARL OF WARWICK AT THE FRENCH COURT . . . . . 302
"Howe erle Richard did his message to the kyng of Fraunce, and brought answers ageyn to kyng Harries greet pleasir."

24. THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY V. . . . . 308
"Here shewes howe kyng Henry the V^th^ was solempnely maried to dame Katheryn the kyng's daughter of Fraunce."

25. LONDON IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY . . 336
This comes from a copy of the poems of Charles of Orleans in the British Museum (Royal MS., 16 F. ii. f. 73). It is the oldest extant picture which shows London Bridge. Charles is looking out from the window of his prison in the Tower, within he is also seen writing at a table.

26. THOMAS, DUKE OF CLARENCE . . . . 348
From his monument in St. Michael's Chapel at Canterbury Cathedral. The tomb is of grey Sussex marble, with recumbent figures in alabaster of Margaret Holland, Duchess of Clarence, and her two husbands (1) John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, and (2) Thomas, Duke of Clarence.

27. THOMAS DE MONTACUTE, EARL OF SALISBURY 352
This represents John Lydgate presenting a copy of his book, *The Pilgrim*, to the Earl. Lydgate is dressed as a Benedictine monk and accompanied by a pilgrim emblematical of the book. *The Pilgrim* is a translation of the *Pèlerinage de l'Ame* of Guillaume de Deguilleville and is contained in Harley MS. 4826 at the British Museum, from which the illustration is copied. *The Pilgrim* was translated, and the miniature executed in 1426. Alice, Countess of Salisbury, who was Lydgate's patroness, was a daughter of Thomas Chaucer, and in all likelihood grand-daughter of the poet; after Salisbury's death she married William, Earl of Suffolk, by whom she was ancestress of the later Poles.

PAGE

28. THE MONUMENT OF THE EARL OF WARWICK. 360

This monument in the collegiate church of St. Mary at Warwick is one of the most magnificent examples of fifteenth-century art in England. The tomb is of grey marble; the effigy and the protecting hearse of hoops are of brass gilt. Round the base of the tomb are niches with figures of copper gilt, representing nobles and ladies of Earl Richard's family; the arms of each are enamelled on a plate below.

The chapel and monument cost £2481 3*s.* 7*d.*, and took twenty-one years to complete. The metal work was supplied by William Austen, citizen and founder of London, and Bartholomew Lambespring, Dutchman and goldsmith of London.

29. CHANTRY OF HENRY V. . . . . 384

This plate gives an architectural representation of the Chantry in Westminster Abbey, detached from the surrounding building and monuments.

30. BADGES, SHIELD, HELMET, AND SADDLE OF HENRY V. . . . . 386

(1) The Badges. From a cornice in Henry's Chantry in Westminster Abbey. In the centre a beacon or cresset; on the left an antelope, one of the royal supporters; on the right a swan, the badge of the Earls of Hereford, in reference to Henry's mother, Mary de Bohun.

(2) The Shield, showing the inside, lined with damask *semée de fleur-de-lis.*

(3) The Helmet or Basnet. Not the helmet worn at Agincourt, but the funeral appurtenance for which Thomas Daunt was paid £1 13*s.* 4*d.* in 1422 (*Fœdera*, x., 257).

(4) The Saddle, anciently covered with blue velvet *semée de fleur-de-lis.* It is 27 inches long, 15 high before, and 13 behind.

The Shield, Helmet, and Saddle are still fixed to a bar above the Chantry, where they were placed nearly five hundred years ago.

PAGE

31. JOHN OF BEDFORD . . . . . 396

This, which is the only extant portrait of John of Bedford, comes from a missal presented by his duchess, Anne of Burgundy, to the young King Henry VI., on Christmas Day, 1430. It is probably the work of a French or Flemish artist. John is kneeling before St. George, who is habited in the Order of the Garter. The motto, *A vous entier*, which appears again and again in the decorations, was justly adopted by the loyal guardian and Regent.

Of the above illustrations numbers 5, 6, 10, 14–20, 22–24, are reproduced from Strutt's *Manners and Customs;* numbers 11 and 27 from Strutt's *Regal Antiquities;* numbers 7–9, 21, 26, and 28–31 from Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments*, vol. ii.; number 12 from Stothard's *Monumental Effigies;* number 13 from Hewitt's *Ancient Armour;* and numbers 1 and 4 from Tyler's *Memorials of Henry V.*

## MAPS AND PLANS.

1. NORTHERN FRANCE . . . . . 1

2. WALES AND THE MARCHES . . . . . 36

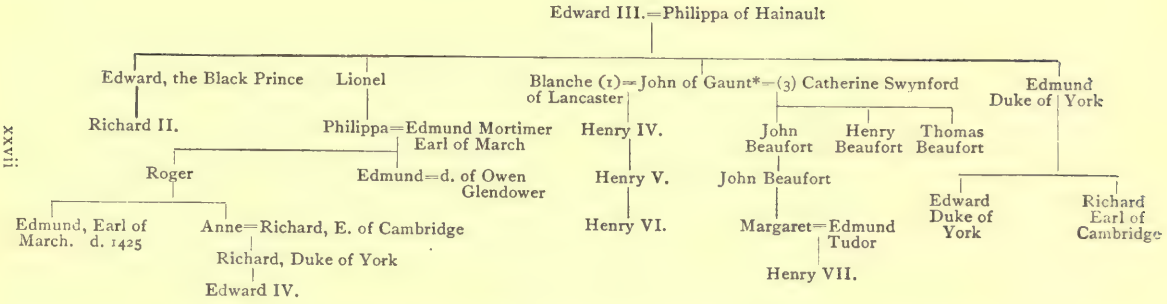
3. THE MARCH TO AGINCOURT . . . . . 138

4. BATTLE OF AGINCOURT . . . . . 146

5. THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1418–1420 . . . . . 234

6. ROUEN IN 1418 . . . . . 242

## PRINCIPAL DESCENDANTS OF EDWARD III.




* John's first wife Blanche was great-granddaughter of Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, second son of Henry III. By his second wife, Constance of Castile, he had a daughter Catherine, who married Henry of Castile. His children by Catherine Swynford were born out of wedlock, but afterwards legitimated.



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## NORTHERN FRANCE.



# HENRY V.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THE fourteenth century was an age of outward splendour. But the pomp and show of its chivalry could hardly cover the decay that was fast overtaking the most cherished objects of the Middle Ages. Old faiths had lost their inspiration, old forms of government were breaking down, the very fabric of society seemed to be on the point of dissolution. It is, however, part of the irony of history that a great ideal too often attains its finest expression only when the period of decline has already commenced. So now amidst the wreckage of the Empire, when the Church was rent with schism, and Europe the prey of warring nationalities, the noblest leaders of thought and politics were filled as they had never been before with a persistent longing for unity. Mankind is more prone to look backwards than forwards, and thus the remedy for present evils was sought rather in the restoration of an old ideal than in the creation of a new order. To bring back

the Golden Past must be the work of a hero, who could revive in his own person the virtues of the chosen champions of the Middle Ages. Such an one must be like Arthur a national and a conquering king, like Charlemagne the defender and head of Church and State, like Godfrey the captain of Christendom in the Holy War.

In theory at all events it had been the essence of Mediævalism that one divinely ordered Church and one divinely ordered State should exist side by side in harmonious co-operation. In practice no doubt it had been far otherwise, though at the close of the fourteenth century Western Christendom still looked to Pope and Emperor as its necessary and natural heads. There was, however, little prospect that a saviour of society could be found in either quarter.

The Empire, it is true, preserved its nominal dignity, and thanks to its union with the German Kingdom, did not lack power. But the Emperor, Wenzel of Luxemburg, was a shiftless drunkard, who possessed neither the talents nor the character that his position required.

The Papacy was in an even worse plight; it had shattered the Empire, but its victory had proved ruinous to its own authority. By aspiring to a secular supremacy, the Popes had been forced to adopt methods that were fatal to their spiritual influence. Their power reached its zenith under Boniface VIII. (1294–1304), who asserted his authority with uncompromising boldness. But his pretensions provoked the national spirit both of France and England; and the humiliation which Boniface suffered at the hands

of Philip the Fair marks the decline of the Mediæval Papacy. After a brief interval there commenced the Seventy Years Captivity, during which the Popes at Avignon sank to be the tools of French policy. Such a position was disastrous to the influence of the Roman Church in other lands. The mischief was too obvious to be disregarded; and in spite of their French birth, Urban V. and Gregory XI. realised that the interests of their office required the restoration of the Roman tradition.

The death of Gregory at Rome in 1378 was followed by the election of an Italian Pope. The French cardinals, who had acquiesced only through fear of the Roman populace, soon found their opportunity; and the headstrong violence of Urban VI. seemed to justify the choice of an anti-pope in the person of Clement VII. The Great Schism, which was thus due to national feeling, was fed by national jealousy. The French Government, true to its traditional policy of a French Papacy, gave its support to Clement against his Italian rival. That was sufficient to secure Urban's recognition in England and Flanders; whilst Scotland and the Spanish Kingdoms followed the lead of their French ally. For a full generation Western Christendom was divided into two camps in accordance with the needs of national policy. When at last the situation became intolerable, the settlement was dictated rather by reasons of international diplomacy than from any motives of religious expediency.

Though neither of the rival Popes would abate anything of their pretensions, they could not maintain

either their spiritual influence or their temporal power. In Italy Urban and his successors lost credit by sharing in the schemes and intrigues of rival princes. In England and in Germany the distant Pope had to be content with bare recognition, whilst his practical authority was less and less regarded. France had aspired to control the Papacy, but found it a costly honour. During the Captivity, and still more during the Schism, the French Popes with diminished resources were confronted with increasing needs. First-fruits and tenths and subsidies were exacted with growing persistence, whilst the encroachments of the Roman Curia on the rights of the national clergy constantly multiplied. Thus the French, who had in the first instance fostered the Schism, became the leaders in the movement for reunion. The University of Paris, which had long been recognised as the fountain of orthodox opinions, and had not feared to withstand even Popes themselves, had accepted reluctantly the choice of their government; but as the abuses of the Schism were made manifest the champions of unity gained strength. Under the guidance of Jean Gerson and Pierre d'Ailly the Doctors of Paris developed the theory of a power that was above the Pope. The head of the Church, argued d'Ailly, is Christ; it is in unity with Him and not with the Pope that the unity of the Church consists; from Christ the Church derived authority to summon Councils for her government; such a Council might call the rival Popes to appear before it, and even remove them from their office.

It was chiefly through the influence of the University of Paris that a General Council at last met at Pisa in 1409. But neither Benedict XIII. (the successor of Clement) nor his Italian rival Gregory XII. would attend. In their absence they were both solemnly deposed, and Alexander V., a man of good repute but little weight, elected in their place. Since, however, the supporters of Benedict and Gregory would not accept the decrees of the Council, the only result was to substitute three Popes for two. Matters changed for the worse when after a year Alexander was succeeded by John XXIII., who had the vices and qualities of an Italian *condottiere*, but was without the character to command the respect and obedience of Christendom.

For England the great and obvious fact of the fourteenth century was the war with France. In its ostensible pretext the war was purely dynastic ; and the brilliant pages of Froissart have made it pre-eminently the conflict of nobles and chivalry. But even in its origin and still more in its ultimate consequences the first period of the Hundred Years War had a very different significance. Commercial interests made the war popular, and gave it a better justification than the King's shadowy claim to the French crown. The sense of national unity was consolidated by the victories of Crecy and Poitiers, which bound King and nobles and people together through pride in their common achievement. The influence of the war extended also to domestic politics. The King's increasing need for money compelled him to summon frequent Parliaments. Nobles

and knights and burgesses were thus trained to act together, and parliamentary institutions gained strength at the expense of the Crown. Most important of all was the association of the country gentry and the citizens of the towns in the House of Commons, where they learnt to value a wider patriotism more highly than local or class interests. The people, grown conscious of their national unity, would not tolerate foreign interference. The old standing hostility to Roman pretensions gathered fresh strength from the natural dislike to a Papacy controlled by France. As a direct consequence there came the enactment of the famous Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire, the first step in the long struggle which delivered England from the yoke of Rome. If, however, the French war was stimulating, it was also exhausting. The effort proved too great for the undeveloped resources of the nation, and the tide of war turned inevitably against England. With defeat came disorganisation. The finances were embarrassed; the war was badly managed; the difficulties and disasters of the Government furnished domestic factions with a convenient excuse.

The social and political disorder was not due entirely to the war. The ravages of the Black Death, which swept away half the population, involved a social upheaval that could end only in revolution. Though the process was slow, and though the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 failed miserably, the old order was doomed. The grievances of the labouring classes were in England supported by a spirit of independence and a love of freedom unknown else-

where; from this point dates the gradual decay of villenage and the emancipation of the country folk from feudal tyranny. For the moment, however, the failure of the Peasants' Revolt led to a reaction. For nearly twenty years the political history of England is concerned with the factious strife of an oligarchical nobility. When at last King Richard freed himself from the control of his ambitious kinsmen and their partisans, he endeavoured to rule more absolutely than his predecessors had ever claimed to do. Richard failed, because his theory of government ran counter to national sentiment: "The realm was in point to be undone for default of government, and undoing of the good laws." The Revolution of 1399, which placed Henry of Lancaster on the throne, was in truth a popular movement, and for the first time gave to the royal power a parliamentary title. On the other hand, Henry's success was made possible by the support of the great House of Percy, so that the immediate result of the revolution was to threaten the restoration of oligarchical tyranny. To combat this danger was the first task of the new dynasty, and Henry IV. achieved his purpose by the frank acceptance of his position as a constitutional ruler. His policy was continued by his son, the strength of whose position consisted in the fact that he was a national King and the chosen representative of his people's will.

In its outward form the Revolution of 1399 resembled closely that of 1688. Both owed their success to the existence of a genuine national feeling; both were actually the work of an oligarchical party.

The earlier movement, was, however, premature; for though the idea of popular government was widely spread, there was no one to give it practical and permanent force. Wycliffe it is true was at once the spokesman of national policy and the prophet of a new order. The first position he held consciously; but into the importance of his other role he had not himself full insight. He had made his entry on a public career as the defender of national rights against papal aggression. When the possession of power becomes a matter for dispute, it is inevitable that men should question also the principles on which that power depends. So by a natural process the great Reformer was led to attack, first the abuses of the ecclesiastical polity, and eventually the doctrinal basis on which that polity rested. The Church in England had grown wealthy and corrupt and had lost its ancient hold on the national affections. It was, however, an essential part of the political and social organisation of the time, so that an attack on the Church could not remain simply a question of religion. Though Wycliffe's own teaching was in the first place religious, it lent itself to dangerous social developments, with which he had little personal sympathy. This was at once the weakness and the strength of the Lollard party. If the movement had remained purely religious it might have hastened an ecclesiastical reformation; but doctrinal Lollardy was never really strong in England, and lost more than it gained from the support of its worldly allies. Political Lollardy on the other hand furnished the centre for

all the forces of social discontent; but from lack of leadership the movement tended to be merely anarchic, and ceased to be dangerous as soon as the central Government showed itself worthy of its trust.

Notwithstanding the troubles at home there had been no solution of the quarrel with France. It is easy to argue that a policy of non-interference in European affairs would have been the wise course for English rulers to adopt. But ancient tradition and present opportunity alike pointed in an opposite direction. At the commencement of the fifteenth century the world's horizon was still limited, and it was impossible for England to remain outside continental politics in splendid isolation. In the French war there were involved both national interests and national pride. The skilful policy of Charles V. and the generalship of Du Guesclin had enabled France to recover much that she had lost by the Treaty of Bretigny in 1360. After the death of Charles V. in 1380 the war continued in a desultory fashion without any great advantage to either side, and in spite of frequent truces there had been no settled peace. Richard II. during the short period of his absolute power sought to restore friendly relations, and took for his second wife Isabella, the little daughter of Charles VI. The new policy was rudely interrupted by Richard's untimely end; the French Court sympathised naturally with the fallen King, whilst the disposal of the child-Queen and of her dower added another awkward question for the consideration of the two Governments. The state of

affairs in France did not make a definite settlement easier; the war and the plague had disorganised society not less than in England; whilst the long minority of Charles VI., like that of Richard II. in England, opened the door to oligarchical and dynastic feuds. Matters did not mend when Charles VI. grew to manhood and developed a mental weakness which ended in actual insanity. The royal power was in abeyance; whilst the disputes of the King's brother, Louis of Orleans, and his cousin, John of Burgundy, rendered orderly government impossible. Orleans was hostile to England, and though there was no open war, his influence led to a series of petty annoyances, to piracy in the Channel, and secret assistance to Welsh rebels. Thus there was a running sore of enmity between the two nations, and the English Government was furnished with abundant and tangible grievances. Under such circumstances, there could be little prospect of lasting peace. The renewal of the war was inevitable as soon as affairs at home permitted the English King to take advantage of French discord.

This was the threefold task of the House of Lancaster: to recover prestige abroad, to restore peace at home, to re-establish order in the Church. For Henry of Bolingbroke the crown was to prove a thankless burden; but his labours were not in vain, and his son suceeded to the throne under happier auspices. Henry of Monmouth, deriving his inspiration from the past, was the champion of unity against the forces of disintegration. His aims were to govern England on the principles of the old

constitutional monarchy as the chosen representative of his people's will; to maintain his country's place as a part in the whole society of the Western world; and for himself, as became a Christian King, to be the head and leader of a united Christendom.





# CHAPTER II

## HENRY'S BOYHOOD

## 1387–1399

WHEN John of Gaunt espoused his son as a boy of thirteen to the little Mary de Bohun, younger daughter and co-heiress of the last of the old Earls of Hereford, he added yet another to the many ancient titles that found their representation in the House of Lancaster.* But otherwise the match was of little public interest; there was no great likelihood that Henry of Bolingbroke would ever ascend the throne, and none could foretell the splendid destiny that awaited the offspring of his marriage. It is not, therefore, remarkable that the birth of Henry of Monmouth passed unnoticed in the records of the time. The very date is indeed uncertain. A late writer and a foreigner is the first to give the exact day, 9th August, 1387. The date

* The marriage was granted to John of Gaunt in part satisfaction for his war service on 27th July, 1380. (*Cal. Pat. Rolls* Richard II., i., 537.) The little Mary was then only ten years old; but she had a son in April, 1382, though the child did not live (Wylie, iii., 325).

thus assigned may, however, be accepted with tolerable confidence *; it is in part confirmed by the wardrobe accounts of Henry, Earl of Derby, for the year 1387–88,† where mention is made of the purchase of a demi-gown for the young Henry, and also of the birth of his next brother, Thomas.

The barrenness of historical records is compensated for by the traditions that gathered round the birthplace of the future King. At Goodrich it was told how the herald who brought the news from Monmouth was thrown from his horse and killed as he toiled up the rugged hill that leads to the castle; and how Henry of Bolingbroke, — whom the legend makes already King,— hurrying from Windsor, learnt the news of his son's birth through the joyous salutation of the boatmen at Goodrich Ferry. At Courtfield another legend finds the home of Henry's nurse, and a cradle traditionally believed to be his was preserved there within the last century.‡

More authentic history tells us that Henry's nurse

* Elmham says that Henry of Monmouth was born in August and was in his twenty-sixth year when he came to the throne on 20th March, 1413, *cf. Vita*, p. 17; so also *Versus Rythmici*, 35–37, 59–60, and Livius, p. 5. *The English Chronicle* (Cotton MS., Claudius A., viii., f. 10$^{vo}$, and f. 12$^{r}$) says that he was in his thirty-sixth year when he died on 31st August, 1422. With this Leland, *Collectanea*, i., 38, agrees. The more exact date is first given by Paolo Giovio (*d.* 1552) in his *Vitæ Illustrium Virorum*, p. 70. Wylie (iii., 324), however, argues for August, 1386. Other authorities give 1388, which is certainly wrong.

† To speak exactly, from 1st October, 1387, to 30th September, 1388.

‡ In 1881 this cradle was in the possession of the Rev. G. W. Braikenridge at Clevedon (Wylie, iii., 324).

was called Johanna Waring, as we learn from the grant of an annuity of £20 which the young King, ever mindful of his friends, made to her in the first year of his reign. His mother, after bearing her husband three other sons and two daughters, died when only four-and-twenty in July, 1394. His father was often absent from England and can have seen but little of Henry and his brothers. So the young Henry's childhood, after the manner of the time, must have been passed chiefly in the care of servants at one or another of his grandfather's manors or castles, at Hertford, Kenilworth, or Tutbury. At the end of 1395 there was some talk of a marriage for the little Prince with Mary, daughter of Duke John IV. of Brittany. But private records have more to tell of the childhood of Henry of Monmouth than can be found in state-papers. The accounts of the Duchy of Lancaster supply us with a variety of details bearing on Henry's boyhood. Thomas Pye has "6*s.* 8*d.* for a horse hired at London on 18 March 1395 to go with all speed to Leicester on account of the illness of my lord Henry." Other items are for soap and shoes, for cloaks and mantles, black straw hats, scarlet caps and green russet gowns for the little princes. In February, 1396, there comes "4*s.* for seven books of grammar bought at London for the young lord Henry." Next year we find "8*d.* by the hand of Adam Gastron for harpstrings for the harp of the young lord Henry." In the same year Stephen Furbour has 12*d.* for a new scabbard, and Margaret Stranson of London "1*s.* 6*d.* for three quarters of

an ounce of tissue of black silk for the sword of the young lord Henry." *

These details, trifling in themselves, are enough to show that Henry's education received careful attention. Tradition says that he spent some time at Oxford under the charge of his uncle, Henry Beaufort. The room over the ancient gateway of Queen's College opposite St. Edmund Hall long bore an inscription declaring that it had once been the modest chamber of the future lord of Britain and conqueror of Gaul.† It is probable enough that Henry should have been under his uncle's care at Oxford during the year that Beaufort was Chancellor of the University in 1398. But beyond this there is no evidence either to confirm or disprove the tradition. However, Henry was but a boy of eleven at the time; and though in after life he showed some interest in the welfare of the University, his residence at Oxford can have had little influence on his character. It is of more interest to note the

* *Duchy of Lancaster Receipts* ap. Tyler, i., 15, and Wylie, iii., 327–328.

† The inscription, which was in Latin, ran as follows:

"Imperator Britanniæ
Triumphator Galliæ
Hostium rector et sui
Henricus Quintus, hujus collegii
Et cubiculi (minuti satis),
Olim magnus incola."

Both gateway and chamber have long been destroyed. In Hearne's time (20th June, 1720), they were much noted by curious persons coming to Oxford. *Cf.* L. Hutten in *Elizabethan Oxford*, p. 64. In Fuller's days the room was occupied by Bishop Barlow.

probability that the future King had thus early come into close relations with his kinsmen the Beauforts.

For other reasons the year 1398 was a memorable one in the history of the House of Lancaster. On 23rd February the Duke of Norfolk had denounced Henry of Bolingbroke, now Duke of Hereford, as a traitor. A court of chivalry ordered the dispute to be decided by single combat. On the appointed day, 16th September, when the rivals had already entered the lists at Coventry, King Richard stopped all further action and condemned them both to banishment. Norfolk's sentence was for life; Hereford's for ten years. In the following February John of Gaunt, the old Duke of Lancaster, died, and the King, breaking his promise to his cousin, banished him forever, and confiscated his estates. But at the same time a sum of £500 a year was provided for the maintenance of the young Henry of Monmouth. Richard, who, whatever other faults he possessed, was a man of kindly feeling, took the boy under his own care, and kept him about his Court. Policy may have dictated the detention of the young Prince, but a feeling of genuine affection appears to have sprung up between him and the King. Richard was often heard to repeat an old prophecy to the effect that "a prince of the name of Henry will be born in England who, through the nobility of his character and the splendid greatness of his achievements, will illumine the whole world with the rays of his glory." Whether from a spirit of unconscious prescience, or from some peculiar liking that he had for the boy,



HENRY IS KNIGHTED BY KING RICHARD II.

the King would add: "And verily do I believe that this young Henry here will be he." *

On 29th May, 1399, Richard went over to Ireland to quell the insurrection of a chief called MacMurrogh. He took with him his cousins Henry of Monmouth and Humphrey of Gloucester. Humphrey's father was the ill-fated Thomas of Woodstock, his mother was the elder sister of Mary de Bohun. The expedition landed at Waterford on 31st May, and on the morning of St. John's eve marched out against MacMurrogh. The Irish retreated into the woods without fighting, whereupon Richard ordered their villages to be fired. Whilst this was being done he had a space cleared on all sides and his standard erected.

"Then out of pure and entire affection he called to him the son of the Duke of Lancaster, who was a fair young bachelor and handsome. And so he dubbed him knight saying: 'My fair cousin, be henceforth gallant and brave, for little bravery wilt thou have unless thou dost conquer.' And the more to honour and encourage him by adding to his happiness and pleasure, and to the end that he might remember it the better, he made yet other knights, eight or ten; but indeed I know not their names." †

The warfare with MacMurrogh was attended with little success, and after a while Richard went on to

* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 5.

† Creton, ap. *Archæologia*, xx., 31; Creton was a French knight in Richard's service who wrote a metrical chronicle of the events of the year.

Dublin. He could hardly have reached that city, when early in July the news came that Henry of Lancaster had landed at Ravenspur to claim his inheritance. Richard at once sent the Earl of Salisbury back to England, but unhappily for his fortunes delayed his own departure nearly three weeks. Before he left Dublin he called young Henry to his presence and said: "Henry, my boy, see what thy father hath done to me! He hath invaded my land and put my subjects to death without mercy. Certes, am I sorry for thee, since through these unhappy doings thou wilt perchance lose thine inheritance." Henry, though but a boy, replied in a manner beyond his years. "In truth, my gracious lord and King, I am greatly grieved at these rumours. But I believe your lordship understands that I am innocent of my father's deed." "Yes," answered Richard, "I know that thou hast no part in thy father's crime, and therefore I hold thee excused of it." *

On Richard's departure Henry and his cousin Humphrey were sent for safe custody to the castle of Trim in Meath. Meantime the King's late coming to England had "robbed him of his friends, his fortune, and his state." On 19th August Richard made his submission to his rival at Flint, and accompanied him as a prisoner first to Chester and then to London. A Parliament was at once summoned in Richard's name to meet at Westminster on 30th September. On the previous day a committee of Henry's supporters obtained from the

*Otterbourne, p. 205.



THE PARLIAMENT OF 1399.

King his formal renunciation of the crown, and when the Lords and Commons assembled the throne was left vacant. After Richard had been solemnly declared unfit to govern, the Duke of Lancaster claimed the crown as descended in the right line from Henry III. The Estates gave their assent to his election, and Archbishop Arundel, taking him by the right hand, seated him on the throne.

Before the Duke of Lancaster left Chester he had sent one Henry Dryhurst to bring his son over from Ireland. The young Prince probably joined his father in London before the end of September. At all events he was present on 6th October, when the Parliament that had been summoned in Richard's name met for the second time as the Parliament of the new King. On Sunday, 12th October, in preparation for his coronation on the following day, the King made forty-five new knights. At the head of the list were Henry of Monmouth — in apparent disregard of his previous knighting by Richard — and his three brothers. In the afternoon the King went in procession from the Tower to Westminster. Before him rode the new-made knights clad in cloaks of green cut after a priestly fashion. On the Monday Henry was solemnly crowned in the Abbey, his son, as representative of the House of Lancaster, bearing the pointless sword Curtana, emblematical of Justice and Mercy.* After the ceremonies of the coronation were over, Parliament reassembled, and on 15th October, Henry of Monmouth was with the assent of the Commons created Prince of Wales, Duke

* Adam of Usk, p. 33 ; *Fœdera*, viii., 90.

of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester.* His father, seated on the throne, granted him investiture by placing a gold coronet adorned with pearls on his head, and a ring on his finger, and by delivering into his hand a golden rod. Then, after the King had kissed and blessed him, the Duke of York as chief prince of the blood conducted him to his place in Parliament, and the Commons swore to observe the same faith and loyalty, aid, assistance, and fealty towards him as to his father. In the same Parliament, on 23rd October, the young Prince was declared Duke of Aquitaine. On 10th November he was further made Duke of Lancaster, the vast revenues of which duchy were thus attached to the throne; though as a special privilege the duchy was to remain independent of the Crown. A week previously the Commons had begged that they might be entered on the record at the election of the Prince, and petitioned that since "the Prince is of tender age he may not pass forth from the realm."† With this formal recognition of his position as heir to the throne, Henry of Monmouth entered on his public career, and young as he was in years the period of his boyhood came to an end.

* *Fœdera*, viii., 91–94, 148.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 426–434.



# CHAPTER III

## TROUBLES OF THE NEW REIGN

### 1399–1402

THE circumstances of the time are sufficient to explain the early age at which the young Henry of Monmouth began to take his part in public affairs. His father's reign was from the first troubled and broken. At home there was constant sedition and discord ; abroad wars or rumours of wars.

The movements of Henry of Bolingbroke during the three months that elapsed between his arrival at Ravenspur as a landless adventurer and his crowning at Westminster as the acknowledged King of England, were attended by a startling rapidity and good fortune which obscured the imperfection of his achievement. Though Richard had fallen, he was not friendless, and his name long furnished a rallying-cry for the enemies of Lancaster. Even when Richard had died in prison and been buried at Langley, there were many who believed that he had escaped and was living in Scotland.* Henry's own

* The pseudo-Richard, "the mammet of Scotland," had a pension from the Scottish Government and lived at Stirling till 1419.

position was on the other hand not free from question, since his hereditary claim to the throne was inferior to that of his cousin Edmund Mortimer, the young Earl of March. The superior validity of a parliamentary title was not yet fully recognised ; and though the new King might rule "not so much by right of blood as by popular election," * it was some time before he could feel secure or dispense with the support of the Percies.

Whilst the Parliament that had inaugurated the new dynasty was still sitting there were threatenings of trouble with Scotland and France. But domestic affairs were apparently settled and the King, it may be through over self-confidence, treated his opponents leniently. Richard's chief supporters, his kinsmen the Hollands (Earls of Kent and Huntingdon), and his cousin Edward, Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, escaped with the loss of their recent advancement in rank and title ; his most faithful adherent, the Earl of Salisbury, suffered no loss at all. Such treatment did not disarm their hostility to the new order. The Parliament had scarcely been dissolved before they began to scheme for a counter-revolution.

During the month of December King Henry and his children suffered from illness, which rumour ascribed to the effects of poison. The King had not fully recovered his health when he withdrew from London to spend Christmas at Windsor. There the conspirators purposed to surprise and kill Henry and his sons. But at the last moment Rutland's heart

* Capgrave, *De Illustribus Henricis*, p. 98.

failed him, and he revealed the plot through his father to the King. It was late in the afternoon of Sunday, 4th January, 1400, that the news reached Windsor. There was no time to be lost. Henry took horse at once, and rode that same night with his sons and two attendants to London, escaping his enemies by only a few hours. The faithful Londoners kept the young princes safe from harm, whilst the King marched out to deal with his foes. The insurrection was, however, crushed without Henry's actual interference. If the conspirators had counted on a reaction in Richard's favour they had moved too soon. The people rose in arms against them. Kent and Salisbury were beheaded by the mob at Cirencester on 7th January, and Huntingdon met a like fate a week later in Essex. It was scarcely a mere coincidence that the hapless Richard ended his life within a few weeks of the ill-advised rising of his supporters. Fortune had once more favoured Lancaster, and the domestic position of the new King was for the time strengthened.

Foreign affairs were more threatening; for the suspicion that attached to Richard's death tended to increase the enmity of the French Court towards Henry. The disposal of Isabella of France, the child-wife of the late King, had been from the first somewhat of an embarrassment. In November, 1399, Henry had sought a solution by proposing marriages between his own children and the children of the French King. After Richard's death this idea took a more definite shape; might not Isabella remain in England as the wife of the young Prince

of Wales? To this the French Court was not at all disposed. But the time was not ripe for war on either side; and though the matter was complicated by the question of Isabella's dower, the little Queen was after some negotiation restored to her native country in the summer of 1401.

Whilst the negotiations with France still dragged their course, Henry was able to turn his attention to the settlement of affairs with Scotland. In October, 1399, the Scots had invaded Northumberland and captured Wark Castle. When the news reached London Henry at once declared his intention to march against them in person; but other matters detained him in the South till the following summer. Though at last he crossed the border on 14th August, 1400, he could extort nothing better than fine promises; with these for the time he had to be content, and his own energies were soon absorbed by a more pressing danger.

During Henry's absence an event which was to prove the beginning of serious trouble had occurred in Wales. Though Welsh independence had been brought to an end more than a century previously, the country was still only half subdued. Richard II. had paid some attention to the needs of the principality, and so earned for himself no little goodwill. The prevalent sympathy for his cause, and the hatred of the native Welsh for the great English lords, who held the land like a garrison, together afforded the existing Government sufficient ground for anxiety. But a private quarrel was to be the immediate cause of the outbreak.

One of the greatest lords of the Welsh Marches was Reginald Grey of Ruthin, who had for a near neighbour a Welshman of good family, Owen, Lord of Glyndyvrdwy. In the spring of 1400 a dispute between Owen and Grey as to the ownership of certain lands had led to a kind of petty warfare. The King and his Council were anxious to conciliate the Welsh gentry of the border. Grey, intent on his private interests, failed to carry out their policy, and by a piece of ill-timed harshness set the whole country ablaze. Amongst the followers of Owen was one Griffith ap David, who, trusting to the King's proclamations, came to Oswestry in the belief that he would obtain a charter of protection. When he found himself rather in danger of prison for his share in the late disturbances, Griffith fled to the mountains and openly defied Grey, telling him that: "As many men as you slay, and as many houses as you burn for my sake, as many will I slay and burn for your sake; and doubt not I will have bread and ale of the best that is in your lordship." Grey replied in wrath with a promise of "a rope, a ladder and a ring, high on gallows for to hang"; and wrote off to the Prince, who was nominally regent during his father's absence in Scotland, urging severe measures and the summary arrest of Griffith as the "strengest thiefe of Wales." *

These events took place in June with the result that Henry on his way back from Scotland learnt that North Wales was in open rebellion. After summoning the Prince to join him, the King entered

* Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., i., 3–7.

Wales at the end of September. The Welsh retreated to the mountains, whither the English, through the inclement season and lack of supplies, were unable to follow them. Nothing effectual could be done, and by mid-October the King was back at Shrewsbury. Before leaving the Welsh border he made such provision as was possible for the intended suppression of the revolt next year.

The young Henry of Monmouth was left behind at Chester, and in name the government of North Wales and of the Marches was to be administered by him. In reality, of course, authority was not put in the hands of a boy of thirteen, but in those of his Council. Chief of that Council was Henry Percy, the famous Hotspur, who had been appointed Justiciar of North Wales nearly a year previously. Shakespeare, with perhaps less regard for historic fact than usual, has made the association of "Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales" the occasion for a striking contrast between the King's dissolute heir, and the strenuous son of the man to whom the House of Lancaster chiefly owed the throne.

It is important to realise more accurately the relationship that existed between the young Prince and the head of his Council. There was between them nothing of the rivalry of youth; for Hotspur, though still in the flower of his manhood, was "no Mars in swathing clothes, no infant warrior"; he was far deeper in debt to years than the Prince, and was indeed somewhat older than the King himself. But whilst Henry IV. was præternaturally old in mind and body, Hotspur preserved to the last, both

in thought and deed, the headstrong and reckless vigour of youth. If he was not by character well fitted to be the governor of a young prince, his long experience of border warfare gave him some special qualifications for the Welsh command. Still, the choice of Hotspur for such a position must have been due rather to the necessity of conciliating the powerful family to which he belonged, than to his own personal qualities. Hotspur can have given Henry of Monmouth no instruction in the mysteries of statecraft, or generalship; nevertheless, he was a doughty soldier, under whose leadership a high-spirited youth was likely to gain a practical acquaintance with the rough-and-tumble side of warfare.

In the autumn of 1400 it was scarcely possible for the King or Council to realise fully the serious character of the Welsh affair. On 30th November, proclamation had been made offering free pardon to all who came to the Prince at Chester before the meeting of Parliament next year. About the same time Glendower's estates were confiscated and bestowed on the King's half-brother, John Beaufort. Owen replied by assuming the style of Prince of Wales; at all events his so-called "reign" dated from now.

The movement which had originated in local disorder and discontent was beginning to take the form of a national uprising. There had been no active effort for independence in Wales for nearly a century, but the tradition was not dead. Only a generation previously a Welsh soldier of fortune in the service of

France had claimed to be the heir of Llywelyn; the pretensions of this Owen of Wales to be the rightful prince of his native land, when supported by the French King, were formidable enough to cause Edward III. serious anxiety. Glendower professed that he was the right heir by consanguinity of this former Owen, and on this score appealed for French aid.*

Glendower's claim to princely ancestry was not altogether groundless, and whatever its merits may have been, it found substantial support in the patriotism of the Bards. Strange tales floated about of portents that had heralded Glendower's birth. The Bards wandering from village to village stirred up the national sentiment by predictions that the prophecies of old were now to find their destined fulfilment.† The whole people were in a ferment; Welsh scholars gave up their studies at Oxford, and Welsh labourers left their profitable employment in England to hurry home and join the standard of the new leader.‡ Many castles and towns in Wales fell into the hands of the rebels, and even places like Shrewsbury were not secure from danger. By the spring of 1401 it was clear that the English Government had to deal with no local disturbance. When Parliament met in February the Commons addressed an urgent representation to the King, with the result that elaborate ordinances were issued for the better

* *Chron. St. Denys*, iii., 164.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 508.

‡ *Id.*, iii., 457; Ellis, *Original Letters*, i., 8, gives a list of Oxford students.

goverment of Wales and the more effectual securing of English authority. *

Before the policy of the royal Government could have any effect the Welsh rebels under William ap Tudor and Howel Vaughan captured Conway Castle through the treason of some of the garrison. Hotspur, accompanied by the young Prince Henry, marched promptly into Wales, and laid siege to the Welsh in the castle. When Conway at last surrendered on 28th May, the conditions which Percy thought it wise to concede did not altogether commend themselves to the King or his Council. "My dread Lord the Prince" appears as the figurehead in all Percy's proceedings. But the years and inexperience of the young Henry forbid our supposing that he had any practical voice in the affairs that were conducted in his name. Whatever success was achieved could redound only to Percy's credit and to the increase of his power. The King may well have felt uneasy at the possible growth in a new quarter of the influence of that one too powerful family to which he owed his throne. Hotspur on his part was not without good reasons for complaint; since through the poverty of the English Government, which left him ill-furnished with supplies, he had been forced to conduct the war at his own cost. Of such a position Percy soon wearied, and at the end of August he finally resigned his appointment.

The immediate and ultimate consequences of Hotspur's connection with Wales were alike unhappy. In dudgeon at the inadequate support afforded him he

* *Fœdera*, viii., 184.

had done nothing since May, and on his departure the rebellion broke out with fresh violence. The King and his son invaded Wales in October with very similar results to those of the previous year. The Welsh again retreated to their mountains, and again the English through bad weather could not pursue them. The harrying of Welsh territory was of no effect for the suppression of the rebellion, and after a raid of less than a fortnight the King returned baffled to Shrewsbury. Glendower had the trophies if not also the substance of victory, since by a stroke of good fortune he captured the horses and baggage of the Prince of Wales himself.

As in the previous year, the campaign was followed by a rearrangement of the administration. The Earl of Rutland was made Lieutenant of North Wales, whilst South Wales was entrusted to Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester. The Prince was still the nominal head of the government, and in November the Council advised that to provide for his great expenses in Wales he should receive the Isle of Anglesey, together with £1000 from the estates of the Earl of March. Anglesey had been in the possession of Hotspur, who was to be compensated out of the lands of the Mortimers. The Percy interest was further conciliated by the choice of the Earl of Worcester to be tutor to the young Prince.

It was about this time also that Henry of Monmouth was first brought into association with a man who was to play no small part in his history, and an even larger one in the legends that have amplified the story of his youth. In the autumn of 1401 the

famous Sir John Oldcastle makes his first appearance in history as Warden of Builth Castle and the valley of the Wye. Later legend, working on the ill-repute of his heresy, and his notorious friendship with the Prince, found in him the prototype of Henry's boon companion, "my old lad of the Castle," "the villainous, abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan." In point of fact, Oldcastle was at this time a Herefordshire knight of some local consideration, to whom no taint of Lollardy had yet attached. With the jovial, roystering, but cowardly Falstaff he has nothing in common save his friendship for the young Prince. Through their association in the Welsh war, Henry learned to appreciate the knightly prowess and manly uprightness of Oldcastle at their true value. Oldcastle owed his advancement to the Prince's favour; but it was in vain that he tried to convert his master to his own views. Probably enough their friendship was a scandal to the orthodox; certainly it roused false hopes in the hearts of the reformers. To Henry's own life it contributed a dark shade of tragedy.

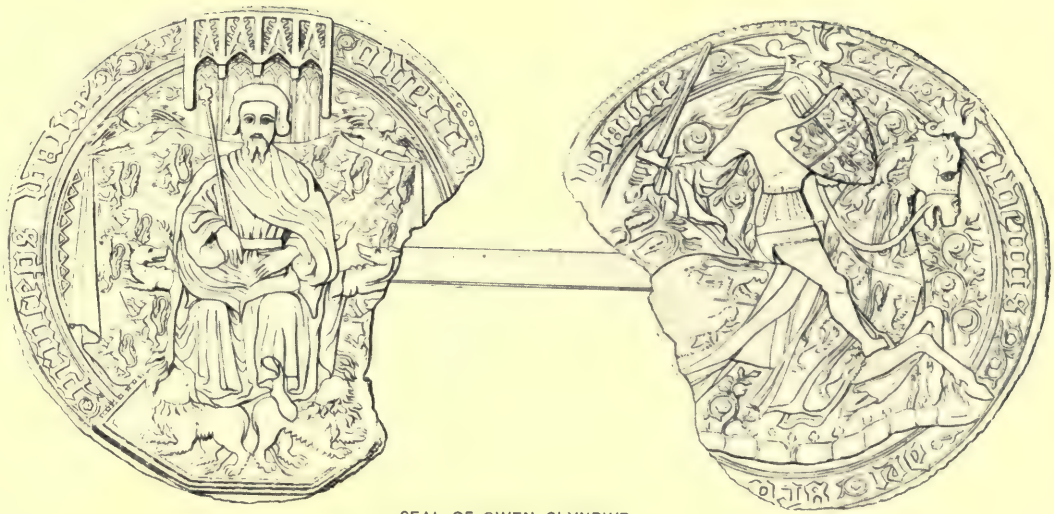
With the actual government of Wales the young Prince himself had still little to do. Probably he was not even present on the Welsh border at this season, for during the following spring he was in London, where on May 8, 1402, he gave his assent to a proposed marriage with Catherine, sister of the young King Eric of Denmark. A week later at Berkhampstead he witnessed a like instrument providing for the marriage of his little sister Philippa

to Eric. At the end of the month he had gone on to Tutbury in Staffordshire, apparently on his way to the Welsh border.

Meantime affairs in Wales had gone from bad to worse. Owen had been intriguing not only with the Irish and Scots, but even with the more distant though hereditary ally of Welsh pretenders in France. Perhaps also he had begun to work for his threefold alliance with Percy and Mortimer; for Jenkin Tyby had brought him letters out of the North Country, as it was deemed from Henry Percy.* In January, 1402, the Welsh made a raid against Ruthin, and Owen had the good fortune to take prisoner his old enemy Lord Grey. It was a sinister circumstance that in this raid the lands of Mortimer were left unharmed. But the time for more open action had not yet arrived, and in the summer Sir Edmund Mortimer, the uncle of the young Earl of March, was actually in chief command on the border. On 17th June the Welsh surprised Mortimer at Brynglas near Knighton, and defeated him with heavy loss. Mortimer himself, whose tenants had joined openly with the Welsh, was taken prisoner. Owen received him with honour and even with kindness, and it was soon alleged that the defeat of the English had been due to the treason of their commander.

For the third summer in succession the crisis in Wales demanded the King's personal attention. On this occasion the war was to be conducted on a large scale. Three armies were ordered to be in readiness

* Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., i., 9.



SEAL OF OWEN GLYNDWR.

by the end of August. The first was to advance from Hereford under the Earls of Arundel, Stafford, and Warwick, and the second under the King from Shrewsbury; whilst the third, which was to start from Chester, was entrusted to the young Prince Henry. The total force is alleged to have numbered over 100,000 men — doubtless a gross exaggeration — and it was September before the armies could take the field. Once more the elements fought against the English; the King himself had a narrow escape, his tent was overthrown by a storm in the night, and many of his followers perished from the cold. The Welsh vanished into their impenetrable mountains; and when supplies failed, the English returned home with an insignificant booty. Glendower had good reason to boast:

> "Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
> Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye,
> And sandy-bottomed Severn, have I sent him
> Bootless home, and weather-beaten back."

The King's ill-success was sufficiently disappointing in itself. It was rendered more so by contrast with the good fortune which attended the English arms in another quarter and under other auspices. At the same moment when the King and Prince were raiding haplessly in Wales, the Percies, father and son, had met and routed the Scottish invaders at Homildon Hill. The very completeness of their victory was an embarrassment to the King. The new service which his most formidable subjects had thus rendered him could neither be rewarded nor

passed over without danger. Immediately on the receipt of the news Henry ordered the Percies not to ransom any of their prisoners, but to send them forthwith to London. Hotspur refused to surrender his own special prisoner, the Earl of Douglas, unless the King would ransom Sir Edmund Mortimer, whose sister was Henry Percy's wife. But the King would do nothing to further Mortimer's release, and his suspicions were justified presently by the marriage of Mortimer to Owen's daughter.

From this time the plot began to thicken. If, however, the King had any inkling, he found it prudent to dissemble; and even to reward the Percies with substantial grants of conquered lands in Scotland. Still the circle of those who could be trusted grew manifestly narrower, and deliberate policy must have dictated the concentration of important posts in the hands of the King's own family. It was as part of such a scheme that the young Prince Henry was in the early spring of 1403 nominated as the King's Lieutenant in Wales.



# CHAPTER IV

## THE PERCIES AND OWEN GLENDOWER

### 1403–1408

ON 7th March, 1403, by the recommendation of the Council, Henry of Monmouth was appointed to be his father's Lieutenant on the Marches of Wales. On the same day the Earl of Worcester resigned his command as Lieutenant of South Wales, whilst retaining his position as the Prince's governor. It is not, however, clear that Worcester accompanied the Prince to Wales, and we are justified in assuming that the Welsh command was henceforth Henry's in fact as well as in name.

Henry was to enter on his duties from the 1st of April. His orders were to prosecute the war with vigour; and he had authority both to punish those who abetted the rebellion and to pardon those who made their submission.* On reaching his headquarters at Shrewsbury the Prince at once prepared to take the field. Owen was rumoured to be mustering his forces for a raid, and the English garrisons at

* *Fœdera*, viii., 291.

Harlech and Aberystwith were known to be hard pressed.

About the end of April Henry left Shrewsbury, and marching through Denbighshire and the valley of the Dee, returned to his headquarters by way of Montgomery on 15th May, when he reported his progress to the Council. The letter which he wrote on this occasion may fairly be regarded as the first document of importance for which Henry was personally responsible.

*To the Council :—*

"From the Prince. Very dear and entirely well-beloved, we greet you well and from the bottom of our heart, thanking you very dearly for the good consideration that you have for the needs that touch us in our absence ; and we pray you effectually for your good and long continuance as our trust is in you. And in the matter of news from these parts, if you would know it, amongst other things we were lately informed that Oweyn de Glyndourdy had assembled his power with other rebels of his adherents in great number, purposing to raid and eke to fight, if the English folk should resist his purpose ; for so he boasted himself amongst his own people. Whereupon we took our men and marched to a well-built place of the said Oweyn called Sycharth, that was late his chief mansion, where we thought to have found him if he wished to fight in such manner as he said. But on our coming thither we found not a soul, so we burnt all the place, and several other dwellings of his tenants thereabout. And next we marched straight to his other place of Glyndourdy for to seek him ; and there we burnt a fair lodge in his park and all the country

# WALES & THE MARCHES.



roundabout. And we ourselves lodged therein all that night, and certain of our men went out thence into the country, and took prisoner a great gentleman of the country, that was late one of the chieftains of the said Oweyn. This gentleman offered £500 for his ransom to have his life, and swore to pay the said sum within two weeks. Howbeit this was not accepted, but he had the death, as did divers others of his companions that were taken on the same day. And after that we marched on to the cymmwd of Edeyrnion * in [the county] † of Merioneth, and there we wasted a fair land and one well-inhabited. And thence we marched on into Powys and [by reason of the scarcity] † of fodder for horses in Wales we made our people carry oats with them. Our hosting lasted [ . . ] † days. And to inform you more fully of this march and of all other news from this quarter we are sending to you our trusty squire, John de Waterton, in whom you may put firm faith and credence in all that he shall report on our behalf touching the news aforesaid. And may Our Lord have you always in His holy keeping.

"Given under our signet at Shrewsbury the 15th day of May." ‡

The expedition had been so far successful that it had checked the threatened counter-raid of Owen. But the castles of Harlech and Aberystwith (or Llampadarn) were still hard pressed. § Moreover, if the rebellion was to be crushed, it was useless for

* This is the upper part of the valley of the Dee.

† The manuscript is mutilated at this part.

‡ Nicolas, *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, ii., 61–62. The original is in French.

§ They were revictualled in June. Wylie, iv., 243–245.

the English to confine their efforts to one or two isolated raids in the course of each summer as had been the case so far. If their warfare was to be successful, it must be continuous and systematic. Henry recognised to the full the requirements of the situation; but he was hampered by lack of means, and such allowances as had been made to him were in arrear. Without money he could make no head against the rebellion, and his private resources were quite inadequate to supplement the deficiency of public funds. Thus he was compelled to remain inactive at Shrewsbury, whence on 30th May he wrote again to the Council representing in strong terms the dangers of his position.*

"Very dear and entirely well-beloved, we greet you well. Forasmuch as our soldiers desire to know of us whether they will be paid for the third month of the present quarter, and tell us that they will not wait here without they be paid shortly their wages according to their agreement, we pray you very effectually that you will ordain our payment for the said month, or otherwise furnish us and make ordinance in time for the safe-keeping of these Marches. For the rebels hear each day whether we shall be paid, and they know well that without payment we cannot abide. They are labouring to raise all the power of North Wales and of South Wales to raid and destroy the March and the adjoining counties. There will be no resisting them here, if only they can accomplish their malice. And when our men be withdrawn from us, we must ourselves withdraw into England, or else be put to shame for ever; since any

* *Proceedings Privy Council*, ii., 62–63.

man hath wit enough to know that without power of men we could do no more than could another man of less estate. And at present we have great charges, and have made all the provision for them that we can from our small jewels. For our castles of Harlech and Llampadarn have been besieged this long time, and we must relieve and revictual them within ten days; besides which we have to guard this March about us with a third of our power against the rebels. Nevertheless if the war could but be continued, the rebels were never so like to be destroyed as they are at this present. And now that we have shown you fully the state of these parts, may you ordain in such manner as seemeth you best for the safe-keeping of the same, and of this part of the Kingdom, which God preserve, and grant you grace to ordain as is best for the time. Our Lord have you in His keeping. Given under our signet at Shrewsbury this 30th day of May.

"And be you well-advised that we have shown you fully the peril that may befall these parts hereafter, if no remedy be taken in time."

The Council reported the difficulty to the King, who on 10th July wrote from Higham Ferrers directing that payment of £1000 should be made to his son: "So that he may continue the work he has so well begun, the which he cannot do if he have not the wherewithal."

Meantime the danger had been growing more acute. After the English success in North Wales Owen had turned south. At the end of June, Brecon was in jeopardy and a victory won by the men of Hereford on Sunday, 1st July, gave only

temporary relief. On the following day the Welsh of Carmarthenshire rose in force. Llandovery was surprised on the Tuesday by Owen, who that same day marched on to Llandeilo-fawr, intending as it was supposed to attack Brecon and raid the English March. But instead he turned west to Dryslwyn, and on the 5th July appeared before Carmarthen. Next day the town was taken and burnt, and this success was followed by the surrender of the castles of Llanstephan and Emlyn. Many of the chief men of the district joined the rebellion, and Owen felt certain that he would take all the castles and towns in Kidwelly, Gower, and Glamorgan.*

For the moment the Welsh swept all before them and the English officials on the Marches were in consternation. The news of the fall of Carmarthen reached Hereford on the following Sunday. Richard Kyngeston, one of the royal chaplains, who was archdeacon there, wrote that same night to his master bidding him to come in haste. Kyngeston had finished his letter in French, when, as it would seem, fresh news arrived and he added an English postcript of graphic but informal brevity:

"For God's love, my liege Lord, think on yourself, and your estate, or by my troth all is lost else; but and ye come yourself with haste, all other will follow after. On Friday last Carmarthen town is taken and burnt, and the castle yolden by Ro. Wygmor and the castle Emlyn is yolden, and slain of the town of Carmarthen more than fifty persons. Written in right great haste on

* Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., i., 19–20.

Sunday ; and I cry you mercy and put me in your high grace that I write so shortly ; for by my troth that I owe to you, it is needful."*

Before these evil tidings could reach the King the imminence of the danger was past. Owen had thought to conquer Pembroke, but on entering that county found himself withstood by Thomas "the worthy baron of Carew." Owen's muster was "eight thousand and twelve score spears such as they were." Still he dared not meet a strong force of English in the open field. After three days of vain negotiation he sent out seven hundred men to seek a way for escape. But the Baron's men fell upon them and slew them every one (Thursday, 12th July).† The English thought this victory had alone prevented Owen from an invasion of the Marches. If this was Owen's intention, Henry of Monmouth's successful raid in the North and Carew's happy victory in the South had indeed averted a serious disaster. At the very moment of Owen's defeat Hotspur was on his way to join him, and had the allies united their forces before Shrewsbury the King and Prince could hardly have escaped destruction.

The negotiations that led to the alliance of the Percies with Owen Glendower remain a mystery. We can surmise only that Mortimer had supplied the connecting link. To the King himself the defection of Northumberland and his son and brother came as a surprise. Henry had left London on the

* Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., i., 7.

† *Id.*, 2nd Ser., i., 16, 22.

4th July, professedly to assist the Percies in their warfare with the Scots. When writing to the Council from Higham Ferrers on 10th July he announced that after matters in the North were settled he should proceed to Wales. Within less than a week he learnt that Northumberland was assembling his forces, and that Hotspur and the Scottish Earl of Douglas were marching to join Glendower.

Henry reported the news to the Council from Burton on 16th July. At the same time he sent orders to the sheriffs of the Midland counties to come to him with all available men as soon as possible. He marched with his own retinue in hot haste through Lichfield to join his son at Shrewsbury. Thus the straits which had kept the Prince inactive proved a happy accident; for the troops who were at Shrewsbury under command of the young Henry, must have formed the main body of such forces as the King could muster in this supreme crisis of his affairs.

Hotspur reached Chester on 9th July, and a few days later was joined by his uncle the Earl of Worcester. Worcester had up to this time been steward of the young Prince's household, and the defection at such a moment of a man whose word had always been accounted as good as his bond, caused universal surprise.* The Percies and their allies thought to crush the Prince at Shrewsbury and effect a junction with Owen before the King could come to the rescue. It was therefore with no little dismay that the rebels, when they appeared before Shrews-

* *Annales Henrici Quarti*, p. 365.

bury on the morning of the 21st July, beheld the royal banner flying above the walls. Recognising that a serious engagement was inevitable Hotspur withdrew his forces to a convenient position about three miles north of the town. There he proposed to give battle, and calling for his favourite sword learnt that it had been left at the village of Berwick, where he lodged the previous night. On hearing the name Percy grew pale: "We have ploughed our last furrow," he said, "for a wizard in mine own country foretold that I should die at Berwick."

The royal army marched out from Shrewsbury in three divisions. The young Earl of Stafford, husband of Anne of Gloucester, led the van; the other divisions were under the King and Prince. They found the rebels drawn up in an open space on a hillside called Hayteley-field. The ground in front was covered by a thick growth of peas, and a series of small ponds along the foot of the hill made the approach more difficult.

The King, whether fearing to risk his fortunes "on the nice hazard of one doubtful hour," or anxious merely for peace, declared his readiness to treat. In reply to his invitation the Earl of Worcester came to the royal lines, where, "after a long trete," some sort of terms were agreed upon. But through the bad faith of one side or the other the arrangement was at once broken. According to the narrative followed by Shakespeare, Worcester would not let his nephew know "the liberal kind offer of the King," lest, whilst Hotspur's trespass might be forgotten, he himself "as the spring of all should pay for all." Perhaps,

however, the precipitation of the battle was due rather to Henry's military adviser, the Scottish Earl of March, who pressed him to crush his enemies before they could gather head.

It was long past midday when the King gave the order, "Advance Banner." But the Prince's men on the left had already begun to move, and being favoured by the ground came first into action. The battle opened with a skirmish between the archers, in which the rebels, who had with them "the best bowmen in Cheshire," held the advantage. The young Henry himself was wounded in the face by an arrow, but refused to yield to the wishes of his tutors and leave the field. If we may accept the speech put into his mouth by the chronicler* he declared that he would rather die than stain his soldierly reputation by flight. The lad's spirit inspired his followers, who charged up the hill so hotly that they rolled back the right wing of the rebel army, and enclosed it between their own and the King's division. Hotspur fought with desperate courage till he was cut down by an unknown hand. A late tradition adopted by Shakespeare made Henry of Monmouth Percy's conqueror; but the statement is not supported by contemporary writers. It is indeed unlikely that so doughty a warrior should have met his death at the hand of a stripling of scarcely sixteen. Till Hotspur fell the battle was contested stubbornly; but when the King raised the cry, "Harry Percy is dead," the rebels began to waver. Some, however, held their ground, till the fall of night put an end to this "sorry bataill of

* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 7.



THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY.

Shrewsbury, one of the wyrste that ever came to England, and unkyndyst." *

Though it was an ill-omened victory the King's success was complete. The Earl of Stafford and several knights were slain on the royal side, but the rebel army was entirely dispersed. Among the prisoners were the Scottish Earl of Douglas, and the traitor Thomas of Worcester. Worcester and the other rebel leaders were brought to trial on the Monday after the battle and at once executed. Hotspur's body, which had been at first buried honourably, was after a few days dug up and exposed at Shrewsbury that all might have knowledge of his death.

The state of affairs in the North was so threatening that only four days after the battle the King left Shrewsbury to meet Northumberland in Yorkshire. The young Prince, who on account of his wound was unable to travel, was left behind with power to deal at his discretion with the rebels of Cheshire and the adjoining counties.

How weak the royal power was at this moment is shown by the little progress that was made against the Welsh. In spite of Carew's victory the peril of the Marches was still great. Throughout the early autumn, Shropshire and Hereford were raided repeatedly, and such small forces as the English officials had at their disposal could make no effective resistance.

The King, after receiving the submission of Northumberland, returned at the end of August to the Welsh March, where the old story, "lack of

* *Gregory's Chronicle*, p. 103.

means," kept him paralysed at Worcester and Hereford till nearly a month later. Then followed a fortnight's hurried progress as far as Carmarthen. The Welsh adopted their usual tactics, and as soon as the English withdrew resumed their raids and plundering.

It is doubtful whether the Prince took part in this expedition. In November he accompanied his father to London, where the loyal citizens greeted them with shouts of: "Welcome to our noble King Henry; God bless the Lord Prince his son."

Henry of Monmouth was probably absent from Wales throughout the winter, though his name appears with that of his cousin of York in commissions to grant pardons to the Welsh rebels. The country relapsed into its usual state of disorder. Such English troops as remained behind were too weak to defend even the Marches; and the scanty garrisons in Carmarthen, Harlech, Aberystwith, and other fortresses were hard pressed to maintain themselves. Meantime the Welsh, reinforced by help from France, so ravaged Shropshire that even in the eastern counties men took alarm lest Owen and "and all his people should meet together at Northampton."* Owen was now grown so bold that he styled himself, "by the grace of God, Prince of Wales," and in May, 1404, sent envoys to treat on equal terms with the French King at Paris, where a formal alliance was concluded on 14th June.

Throughout the early summer of 1404 the Welsh raids continued unchecked. Henry of Monmouth came to Shrewsbury in April, but the English seemed

* *Traison et Mort du Roy Richard*, p. 275, note.

powerless. At Hereford the outlook was so serious that on 10th June Kyngeston addressed another alarmist letter to the King. Probably as a consequence of the invasion the Prince had been instructed already to move his headquarters to Worcester, whence on 26th June he wrote to his father as follows:

"My very dread and sovereign lord and father, I recommend me to your high lordship as lowly and obediently as I can, desiring always your gracious blessing and thanking you entirely for the worshipful letters, that your noble highness hath written to me from your castle of Pontefract the 21st day of this present month of June. I have learnt of the fair prosperity of your high and royal estate with the greatest joy that could befall me in this world. I rejoice greatly at the tidings that it hath pleased you to certify to me. And in the first place I rejoice greatly to hear of the speedy coming to you of my dear cousin the Earl of Northumberland and of William Clifford. And in the second place at the coming of messages from your adversary of Scotland under your safe-conduct. May God of His mercy grant you to accomplish all your honourable desires unto His pleasure, to your honour and to the welfare of your kingdom, as I, confiding firmly in the Almighty, believe that you will do.

"My very dread and sovereign lord and father, at your high command in your other gracious letters expressed, I have removed with my poor household to the city of Worcester. My well-beloved cousin, the Earl of Warwick, hath at my bidding come hither with a fair company of his men and at great cost, for the which he hath well deserved of your thanks for his good-will unto you at all times. And as for the news of the Welsh, whether it be true, and of my purpose in

going, concerning which you desire to be acquainted, may it please your highness to know that, before my setting out and since by the way, I have learnt that the Welsh had descended on the county of Hereford, burning and destroying the said county. But God be praised, since my coming to the county I hear of no damage that they have done. Yet am I certainly informed that they are assembled in all the power they can make with intent to burn the said county. For this cause have I sent to my very dear cousins, Richard of York and the Earl Marshal, and others of the most sufficient men of the counties of the March, to join me at Worcester on Sunday next after the date hereof; there to inform me fully of the governance of their districts, and how many men they can muster, and to show me their advice as to what seemeth them best for the safe-keeping of the parts aforesaid. By their advice I will do all that in me lies to withstand the rebels, and preserve the English land to the best of my small power, according as God shall grant me grace; and trusting always in your most high lordship to be mindful of my poor estate. And forasmuch as I cannot continue here without further ordinance be made for my abiding, and since the charges on me are unsupportable, I pray you to so ordain for me in speed that I may be able to do you service here to your honour, and the saving of my poor estate.

"My very dread and sovereign lord and father, may the Almighty Lord of Heaven and Earth send you good life and long-lasting in very fair prosperity to your pleasure.

"Written at Worcester this 26th day of June,

"Your humble and obedient son, HENRY."*

* *Proceedings of Privy Council*, i., 229–230.

The last portion of this letter reveals the reason of the Prince's inaction: the failure of the central government to furnish him with the sinews of war, and the inadequacy of his own resources. On the same day Henry wrote to the Council reciting his coming to Worcester and action there, and concluding:

"We would have you know that we should have nothing to maintain us here had we not put in pledge our poor plate and jewels, and of them made provision of money. Even therewith we can continue but a brief space, and thereafter if you make no ordinance for us, we must depart with shame and mischief, and the country will be undone, which God forbid. But, since we have declared unto you the perils and mischief, we pray you for the love of God make your ordinance in time for the salvation of the King and of all the kingdom. May Our Lord keep you and give you grace to do well."*

Four days later the Prince wrote again to the Council telling them that he was sending his squire, Raulyn de Brayllesford, to report on the affairs of the Marches, and urging them to grant supplies without delay.† Edward of York as Lieutenant of South Wales was in like difficulty, and forced to pledge his own estates to find pay for his men. However, the Council must have devised some method of meeting the demands on them. For when the King held his great Council at Lichfield towards the end of August, the gentlemen of

* *Proceedings of Privy Council*, i., 233. † *Id.* i., 231.

Hereford begged that the Prince might be thanked for the good protection of the county since the Nativity of St. John. The Council then recommended that the Prince should have three thousand marks within three years for the safeguarding of his castles in North Wales. Also he was to have five hundred marks for the maintenance of his troops on the March in September. At this time his whole force was only 129 men-at-arms and 256 archers. By the 1st October he was to have mustered 500 men-at-arms and 2000 archers, so that he might invade Over Went and Nether Went, Glamorgan and Morgannoc, and stay six weeks for the just punishment of the rebels. The real weakness of the royal power was shown by the permission granted at this same time to the men of Shropshire to make a truce with the Welsh till the end of November.*

This winter the Prince remained in the Marches. Never had there been a worse prospect for the English rule. In South Wales the rebels were perhaps held in check but that was all. Carmarthen, Kidwelly, and Llanstephan had to be provisioned from Tenby, and Haverford was besieged so closely that supplies could only be brought by sea from Bristol. Cardiff had long been hard pressed, and in December, 1404, could hold out no longer. Caerleon, Newport, Usk, and Caerphilly had fallen already. Further north Harlech and Aberystwith, after resisting the Welsh for nearly two years, had been at last compelled to surrender.

At the end of January, 1405, the Prince was at

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 549.

Hereford, whence he wrote for reinforcements seemingly with little success; even the five hundred marks promised for September, 1404, were not paid till the following midsummer. Owen was at this moment at the height of his power; but early in March Henry was able to report a success which marked the turn of the tide:

"My very dread and sovereign lord and father, I recommend me to your royal majesty as humbly as I can, desiring humbly your gracious blessing. My very dread and sovereign lord and father, I desire truly that God of His grace may show you His miracles in all things; praise be to Him in all His works. For on Wednesday the 11th day of this present month of March your rebels of the parts of Glamorgan, Morgannoc, Usk, Nether Went, and Over Went were assembled to the number of eight thousand men by their own reckoning. And they set out that Wednesday in the morning and burnt part of your town of Grosmont within your lordship of Monmouth. And I sent forthwith my very dear cousin, the Lord Talbot, with the small company of my household, who was joined by your loyal and valiant knights, William Newport and John Greindor; still they were but a small power in all. Yet it is known that victory is not in the multitude of the people, but in the power of God; and well was this shown. There, by the aid of the Blessed Trinity, your men held the field, and conquered all the said rebels; and they slew of them, by fair reckoning on the field at their return from the pursuit, some said eight hundred and others a thousand on pain of their life. Howsoever, whether it be one or the other, on such reckoning I wish not to dispute; and to inform you fully of all that hath been done I send you a

man of credence in this matter, my loyal servant the bearer of these presents, who was at the feat and did his duty very properly as he doth at all times. Such amends hath God ordained for the burning of four houses in your said town. And of prisoners there were none, save one, who was late a great chieftain among them, whom I should have sent to you, but that he cannot yet ride at his ease. Now touching the governance that I propose to make hereafter, may it please your highness to put firm trust in the bearer in all that he shall show to your highness on my behalf.

"And I pray God keep you always in joy and honour, and grant me to comfort you speedily with other good news."

"Written at Hereford the said Wednesday at night. Your very humble and obedient son HENRY."*

This notable success encouraged the English to renewed exertions. On 25th March the Prince received a fresh commission as Lieutenant of North Wales, and preparations were made for an invasion in force during the early summer. The King left Windsor for this purpose at the end of April, but before he could get farther than Worcester his son sent him news of a fresh victory. On 5th May the Prince's men met a strong company of the Welsh near Usk, and after a sharp fight slew fifteen hundred of them and took prisoner Owen's son Griffith.† Just a fortnight later the Prince won a third victory,

* *Proceedings Privy Council*, i., 248.

† *Annales Henrici Quarti*, p. 399; Otterbourne, p. 251, gives the date as 15th March. Ramsay, i. 85., thinks Griffith was taken prisoner at Grosmont.



A BATTLE WITH THE WELSH.

and captured Griffith Yonge, who was Owen's chancellor.* These repeated defeats were a serious blow to Owen's fortunes, and had the English been able to follow them up promptly, the rebellion might have been crushed. But the intended invasion was delayed by the renewal of trouble in the North.

The old Earl of Northumberland had been busy for months past intriguing with Glendower and Edmund Mortimer. Now, just as Henry was on the point of invading Wales, there came the news that the Earl was in open revolt, and had been joined by Thomas, Lord Bardolph, Thomas Mowbray the Earl Marshal, and Richard le Scrope, Archbishop of York. So serious a crisis required the presence of both King and Prince. A Council which was summoned to meet at Chester on 27th May, had to be postponed, and Henry of Monmouth hurried by forced marches to meet his father at York.† Before he could arrive the rebellion had already collapsed through the surrender of Mowbray and Scrope at Shipton Moor on 29th May. It was a piece of good fortune that the Prince thus escaped any prominent share in the incidents which led up to the execution of the Archbishop; and as a consequence was free also from the heavy responsibility that rested on his father. Scrope's rebellion marks the crisis of the reign of Henry IV., but otherwise is of little importance for our history.

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* "Circa festum Sancti Dunstani," *i. e.* 19th May (*Annales*, u.s.); Mr. Wylie, ii., 171, says in error, "towards the end of October."

† The Prince was at Warrington on 28th May, Preston 29th May, and Skipton 30th May. The King had left Worcester on 26th May.

It is not improbable that the Prince remained for a time in the North. If so we may perhaps assign to this summer an alleged invasion of Southern Scotland under his command.* However, by the end of August both King and Prince were back on the Welsh Marches. The greater part of Monmouthshire was already subdued, and an expedition in September at last achieved the relief of Coyty Castle, which had been closely besieged for more than a year.

The Prince of Wales probably spent the winter with his father in the neighbourhood of London. The King may have already felt the increase of his illness, which was alleged to have stricken him on the day of Scrope's execution, and been anxious for his son's aid in the government. Affairs in Wales also seemed to need less attention. Owen's French allies had for the most part gone home without rendering him any very signal assistance, and his Welsh supporters had not forgotten the lessons of the previous spring. But troubles soon began to brew once more.

Northumberland and Bardolph had taken refuge in Scotland, whence early in 1406 they escaped to join Owen in Wales. It was probably at this time, if ever, that the famous Tripartite Convention for the division of England between Glendower, Percy, and Mortimer was concluded in the Dean's house at Bangor. The English Government was not blind to

* The accounts are not well authenticated. See Hall, p. 35; Polydore Virgil, p. 435; Monstrelet, p. 51 (where the date is November, 1407, which is very unlikely), and Wylie, ii., 275.

the danger. On 1st January, 1406, the Prince was preparing to go to Wales, and the intended Parliament was appointed for his convenience to meet at Gloucester. Though a variety of circumstances kept Henry from the border the mere rumour of his intention was enough to upset the plotters in Wales.

On 1st March the Parliament met, but at Westminster instead of at Gloucester as originally proposed. The troubles of recent years had stirred a ferment of discontent; the session was the longest that had yet been held, and with two adjournments lasted till Christmas.* The Commons were ready with advice as usual; the Prince should be thanked for his services, but should reside permanently in the Marches. Nothing came of this or like proposals, except that the Prince's commission was from time to time renewed. The King's failing health and the importance of the constitutional crisis made a long absence from London inexpedient. It does not appear that throughout this year Henry ever went nearer to Wales than Tutbury.

Meantime the English were at last making head against Owen. On 23rd April, St. George's Day, the Welsh were defeated with great slaughter. Northumberland and Bardolph found their efforts vain, and about midsummer fled oversea to Brittany. By the end of the year the royal authority was fairly restored in South Wales and on the Marches, and the English commanders were able to turn their attention to the recovery of the great northern fortresses that were still in Owen's hands.

* See further, pp. 61–63 below.

In the spring of 1407 elaborate preparations were made for the siege of Aberystwith. Six hundred men-at-arms and eighteen hundred archers were to serve under the Prince from 29th May. Six of the King's great guns were shipped from Bristol for use in the siege, and a plentiful store of bows, arrows, and strings, with stone-shot, sulphur, and saltpetre for the guns, was ready on the border. The chief soldiers who had been trained in the Welsh war were assembled with the Prince for the siege; the Duke of York, the Earl of Warwick, Sir John Greindor, the hero of Grosmont, Thomas, the "worthy baron of Carew," and Oldcastle, still free from the taint of heresy, were all present; whilst Thomas, Lord Berkeley, the Admiral, was general commander and engineer in the timber-works. But the great guns were powerless against the rock-built castle, and the siege soon took the form of a blockade. On 12th September the Welsh under Rhys ap Gruffydd were so reduced that they offered terms to the English commanders. Ten days later the King writing from Pontefract reports the good news which he had from his son, whom he had left in Wales for the chastisement of the rebels.

"Those in the castle of Llampadarn have submitted to the Prince, and have sworn on the Lord's Body administered to them by the hands of our cousin Richard Courtenay, Chancellor of Oxford, in the presence of the Duke of York, that, if we, or our son, or our lieutenant shall not be removed from the siege by Owen Glendower between the 24th October next coming and the Feast of All Saints, they will restore the castle."

It was the King's intention to go in person to receive the surrender of Aberystwith. But before the appointed day Owen obtained entry to the castle by a stratagem, and disowned the agreement for its surrender. Apparently neither Henry nor his son made any attempt to enforce the agreement. They both remained at Gloucester for the Parliament in November, and did not as it would seem even enter Wales. The siege of Aberystwith was, however, renewed and in spite of "an unheard-of pitch of cold," * lasted right through the hard winter of 1407–8, when all the rivers of North Europe from the Garonne to the Vistula were ice-bound. The Prince himself was not present in Wales during this winter or spring. But about the end of May, 1408, he came from Kenilworth to Worcester, and during the latter part of June was at Hereford, busy as we may conjecture with provision for the siege of Aberystwith. It is possible that the town and castle were finally recovered before 23rd September, when Henry was at Carmarthen. For on that date he granted his valet, William Malbon, the office of "Raglore [Regulator] of the cymmwds of Glenerglyn and Hannynyok in our county of Cardigan." † This appointment may well have been one of the measures adopted for the government of the reconquered territory. In all probability Henry left Wales for the last time soon

* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 9: "Frigoris inaudito fastigio." Mr. Wylie, however, puts the end of the siege in the winter of 1408–9.

† *Fœdera*, viii., 547; Glenerglyn appears in Llanfihangel-Geneurglyn north of Aberystwith, and Hannynyok is perhaps preserved in Rhos Haminiog to the south.

after. In December he had special permission to remain with his father. The King's health was failing fast, and now that he could be spared from the Welsh command the work of administration absorbed the Prince's energies.

The later fortunes of Owen Glendower may be briefly sketched. In February, 1409, Harlech Castle was recovered by Gilbert and John Talbot. A desultory warfare still went on; but the English gained ground steadily, though a large force had to be kept in North Wales for some years to come. Owen's wife, his daughter (the widow of Edmund Mortimer), and his four grandchildren were captured at Harlech. Owen himself held out, refusing to yield, and wandering in the mountains, where later English legends declared that he died of starvation. More probably he made his peace at the last, for on 5th July, 1415, Gilbert Talbot had orders to treat with Owen and admit him to the King's grace and pardon. Owen had not surrendered in the following February, when Talbot's commission was renewed.* This is the last mention of Owen in history, but the Welsh Bards and traditions describe him as passing a quiet old age in the homes of his English sons-in-law at Ewyas and Monington in Hereford.

* *Fœdera*, ix., 283, 330.



# CHAPTER V

## THE PRINCE AND THE COUNCIL

### 1406–1413

UP to this point the young Henry's training had been for the most part as a soldier in the field of battle. He was now to enter on his apprenticeship as a statesman in the Council Chamber. The moment was not inauspicious. The troubles that attended the opening years of the new dynasty had either worn themselves out, or been brought far towards a happy solution. To Henry of Bolingbroke, the crown had been an uneasy burden; but now, when under the stress of sickness the reins of power were slipping from his grasp, events began at last to shape themselves for the happier rule of his son.

The year 1408 marks a crisis in the reign of Henry IV. It witnessed the conclusion both of the Welsh war and of the domestic troubles that were the legacy of 1399. The old Earl of Northumberland had thrown his last hazard in February; and with his defeat and death at Bramham Moor there was no further domestic treason of such moment for

a full generation. Thanks chiefly to a frank acceptance of his position as a constitutional ruler, the King had dealt successfully with the abundant discords of his early years. The foreign relations of England had also grown easier. Both Scots and French had troubles enough of their own to keep them employed. As regards the former, first the successes of the Percies, and secondly the happy accident which had made the young King James a hostage in the hands of the English Government, put an end to any cause for serious alarm. The French, it was true, had furnished Owen Glendower with armed assistance, and harassed the English with raids in Guienne and with piracy in the Channel; but their hostility was paralysed by the feuds of Orleans and Burgundy. The assassination of Louis of Orleans towards the end of 1407, and the consequent aggrandisement of his rival, led to a position of affairs that favoured the development of an active English policy. In ecclesiastical matters the projected Council of Pisa seemed to promise the early termination of the Great Schism. Thus at his accession to a share in the general administration Henry of Monmouth found himself at once confronted with the chief problems of his career as ruler of England; the consolidation of his dynasty through the healing of domestic differences; the settlement of the war with France; and the restoration of unity to the Church. To these as a minor question we may perhaps add the Lollard movement; and here also affairs had reached a critical stage.

Henry IV. owed his throne to the combined sup-



HENRY IV.

FROM HIS TOMB.

port of the Percies and Arundels. His half-brothers, the Beauforts, had also rendered him loyal service from the first. After the defection of the Percies the King was compelled to rest more and more upon the narrow circle of his own kindred. But, in spite of a passing alienation due to Scrope's execution, he never parted with Archbishop Arundel, with whose policy as representing the old baronial and constitutional party Henry himself was most in sympathy. The Beauforts on the other hand were the leaders of the Court party, and heirs of the policy of John of Gaunt. The young Prince had perhaps been associated from his boyhood with his uncle Henry Beaufort, now Bishop of Winchester, and was at all events much under his influence. The domestic politics of the years from 1406 to 1413 centre round the rivalry of the Arundel and Beaufort interests. It is in this rivalry that we must seek the clue to the conduct of the young Henry. Perhaps as a further complication we may accept the existence of some natural jealousy between the reigning sovereign and his heir.

The Prince of Wales was present during the Parliament at Coventry in October, 1404; but that occasion has no particular importance for the history of his political career. It was otherwise with the great Parliament of two years later. The King was already too ill to take his full share in the government; it was no doubt design and not accident that kept the Prince in the neighbourhood of Westminster throughout the year. In May by the advice of Parliament the King appointed a permanent Council

of seventeen members. This arrangement was intended partly for the King's relief, but it formed also an essential feature in the scheme of constitutional reform. At the head of the Council was Archbishop Arundel; it was in effect the King's ministry directed by his own chosen adviser. The Prince had as yet no regular position in the Council, and was not actively concerned in the early sessions of the Parliament. When, however, the Commons reassembled in October the young Henry is specially named as joining in a petition against the Lollards, who are charged with threatening spiritual and temporal lords alike, and with disseminating false prophecies that Richard II., the "mammet of Scotland," would shortly be restored. The petition was approved and a statute ordered to be founded thereon. But no such statute was ever enrolled; and the reasons for its suppression and the policy of its promoters have both been the subject of much discussion. Some have thought that this measure was to replace the burning statute of 1401, and was therefore aimed at the spiritual policy of Arundel. Others, accepting its genuine character as an act of persecution, have ascribed its abandonment to the strength of Lollard influence.* The terms of the petition appear to preclude the former theory, though probably enough the incident marks some conflict of policy between the Prince and Archbishop. In any case it would seem that Henry's friendship for the Lollard knights who had been his companions in

* Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii., 90; Stubbs, *Const. Hist.*, iii., 372; Ramsay, i., 100.

arms, involved no sympathy with their religious or political opinions.

Another Act of the later session of 1406 may also have been inspired by the Prince. On 7th June the crown had been declared heritable by the King's sons and their heirs male in succession. About the same time ambassadors were appointed to treat for a marriage between Henry of Monmouth and one of the French princesses. It was perhaps to facilitate the proposed match that in December an Act was passed amending the measure of six months previously, which would have excluded from the throne any daughters of the Prince. The French match seems to have been favoured by the Prince himself, for the ambassadors were all men who now, or hereafter enjoyed his special confidence.*

It is remarkable to find a French chronicler crediting the ambassadors with a suggestion that Henry IV. would abdicate shortly in favour of his son. If there is any truth in the story it points to the early growth of differences between the Prince and the King. But for the present at all events there was no open breach ; though the appointment of Arundel to be Chancellor in January, 1407,† may have been due to the desire of the King to ensure a policy with which he was personally in sympathy.

Arundel's administration lasted three years. During this time the Prince had probably more concern in the general government than before ; since,

* Henry Beaufort, Hugh Mortimer, his chamberlain, Thomas Lord Camoys, Sir Thomas Erpingham, and Henry Chichele.

† He replaced Thomas Langley, an adherent of the Beaufort party.

though the siege of Aberystwith gave him employment during the next two summers, he was frequently absent from his Welsh command. The direction of the campaign was entrusted chiefly to Edward of York, who, having abandoned the treasonable practices of his youth, henceforth attached himself to the Prince's interests. York rendered good service before Aberystwith; but when the Welsh failed to keep the terms for its surrender, his old reputation gave colour to suggestions of disloyalty. His character was cleared by the earnest protestation of the Prince of Wales, who, when the Parliament of Gloucester thanked him for his services, took the opportunity to declare that had it not been for York's advice and counsel, he and others of his company would have been in great peril and desolation.

The Parliament of 1407 was held at Gloucester to suit the Prince's convenience. During most of the following winter and spring Henry remained at Kenilworth or Pershore, whence he could watch affairs in Wales. In the autumn of 1408, after the fall of Aberystwith, he came to London. The King's bodily state had grown so serious that his son Thomas was recalled from Ireland; it was no doubt for a like reason that in December the Prince of Wales had special permission to remain by his father's side. As the King's health declined, so the influence of the Prince and his supporters, the Beauforts, increased. The negotiations for the French match were renewed; and an embassy chosen as before from the circle of the Prince's friends,* en-

* Besides Henry Beaufort and Henry Scrope it included Sir

deavoured to arrange a marriage with Catherine, the youngest daughter of Charles VI. For Henry himself a new post was found on 28th February, 1409, as Constable of Dover and Warden of the Cinque Ports. The greater part of the year he spent in London or its neighbourhood.* In the actual administration he had as yet no official part; but he was gradually strengthening his position and preparing the way for a change of government. An incident which was not in itself of the first importance brought him into controversy with Arundel. The Archbishop had in January, 1409, published a series of constitutions, which were intended to check the growth of Lollard heresy in the universities. At Oxford, the University, always jealous of outside interference, yielded reluctant obedience; and, though the teaching of Wycliffe was formally condemned by a commission of doctors, the action of the Archbishop was much resented. The leader of the opposition was Richard Courtenay, a former Chancellor of the University, who had won the Prince's confidence whilst employed with him in Wales. Courtenay's strength no doubt consisted in the Prince's favour, and the incident perhaps contributed to Arundel's resignation of the Chancellorship.

The King's weakness, the constitutional opposition of the Beauforts, and the virulent hostility of the Lollards all helped to make Arundel's position

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Arnold Savage, who had been on the Prince's Council in 1401, and John Catrik, of whom we shall often hear again.

*In July he witnessed a miracle play at Clerkenwell. During the autumn he was at Berkhampstead.

untenable. But the King did not part from him without a struggle. Though the Archbishop resigned on 21st December, 1409, Thomas Beaufort was not appointed in his place till 31st January, 1410. Once made the change was complete. In theory the Council governed as it had done for three years before. But whilst Arundel had been in a special sense the King's minister, the new Council derived all its direction from the Prince, whose name appeared at its head.

The Lollards were well represented in the Parliament which met on 27th January, 1410. They must have been conscious that their influence had contributed to Arundel's downfall, and a variety of circumstances tended to raise their hopes. Oldcastle, their leader, who had strengthened his position by a marriage with the heiress of Cobham, was high in the confidence of the Prince. Thomas Beaufort, the new Chancellor, was suspected of favouring the anti-clerical party, as his father had done before him. The Prince himself had twice been the foil to the religious policy of the Archbishop. Yet any hope, which the Lollards may have entertained that Henry of Monmouth would favour them openly, was speedily dissipated.

Early in the session the Lollard knights in Parliament presented a petition that no persons arrested under the statute of heretics should be kept in prison pending their trial. They urged also, that if only the wealth now lavished on bishops, abbots, and priors were confiscated, there would be enough to maintain

> " Full fifteen earls and fifteen hundred knights,
> Six thousand and two-hundred good esquires,"

let alone a hundred hospitals, and yet leave £20,000 by the year for the King. It speaks strongly for the confidence of the anti-clerical party that so bold a proposition should have even been mooted. However, the Lollards were met promptly by a counter-petition of the Commons, who begged that no action might be taken on the first petition presented in their name.* The influence of Arundel was still powerful in matters of religion; but a contemporary chronicler† asserts distinctly that it was the prohibition of the Prince, as well as of the King, that put an end to the motion.

During the time that these debates were proceeding a Lollard was awaiting his trial at London. This was John Badby, a poor tailor of Pershore, who on 1st March was brought before Convocation charged with denying the real presence of the Lord's Body in the sacrament. On the 5th March the Archbishop pronounced him a heretic, and delivered him with a prayer for mercy to the secular power. The law took its course swiftly, and that same afternoon Badby was burnt at Smithfield. Amongst those who were present was Henry of Monmouth. When the fire was already lit, the Prince, thinking Badby had made a sign that he would recant, ordered the faggots to be removed. Then as the poor wretch lay on the ground, Henry came to him and promised

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 623.

† Otterbourne, p. 268.

him great things, a free pardon and livelihood till his death's day, if he would but recant. But Badby was stiff in his heresy ; so the fire was rekindled and Prince and people stood by to see him perish.* To our modern ideas the whole incident is indescribably horrible. Still we must not judge Henry by an impossible standard, nor think him guilty of wanton cruelty. To Hoccleve the striking thing was the great tenderness which made Henry thirst sore for a poor heretic's salvation. To us, as to his contemporaries, the Prince's conduct furnishes absolute evidence for his unquestioning orthodoxy.

The more particular business of the Parliament had been the appointment of the new Council and the providing of supplies. The conduct of the Commons shows how well established was the theory of constitutional government. On the other hand we find its practice accepted frankly by the King, the Prince, and their advisers. The Commons began with their wonted economy and reluctance, declaring that they could vote no grants till the new Council was formally named. After this had been conceded, the Prince, as head of the King's ministry, reported that he and his colleagues could not govern without money. Then the Commons voted supplies for two years ; but with true constitutional prudence they refused to make a grant for life, and so obviate the need for frequent Parliaments.†

Henry of Monmouth entered on his government with a youthful zeal that interested him in all the

* *Gregory's Chronicle*, pp. 105–106.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 623, 632–635.

details of administration. His time was spent in the neighbourhood of the capital, at Byfleet near Weybridge, at Kennington, or at Berkhampstead. When in London he resided at the Coldharbour in Eastcheap (a mansion built by Sir John Pulteney, who was mayor of the City seventy years previously), where at one time the Black Prince had held his Court. Officially Henry was Lieutenant of Wales, Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Captain of Calais. But his real importance was as a member of the Council; in effect, if not in title, he was its president. His name appeared first on the list of its members; his special position was marked by his exemption from the oath to govern well, and by the precise reference of petitions in Parliament to the consideration of "My lord the Prince and the Council." The Council met frequently, and at all its meetings the Prince was present. So active was he that Hoccleve, who to the pursuit of literature added a post in the Council-office, took occasion to warn his master not to hold meetings on holy days:

> "In the long yere ben werk dayes ynowe,
> If they be wele spent, for to entende
> To counceiles."

The variety of business transacted shows how keen and searching was the Prince's zeal. A declaration made by Bishop Beaufort in Parliament gives the key to Henry's domestic policy now and hereafter: "It is the sovereign safeguard of every kingdom and city to have the entire and cordial love of the people, and to keep them in their laws and

rights." * The Scottish Marches where the Lord John was in command, and Wales where the rebellion was dying out slowly, still drained the resources of the Government.† But matters were settling down, and there was no longer such pressure of need or anxiety as there had been a few years previously. The country at large was peaceable enough. The chief trouble of the Government was probably due to Archbishop Arundel, whose religious activity did a good deal to foster political Lollardy. Now that he was free from secular affairs, Arundel turned his attention once more to Oxford, where he hoped to enforce his spiritual authority by a personal visitation. Richard Courtenay, the Prince's friend, was again Chancellor, and under him the University resisted the Archbishop's pretensions so stoutly that the dispute was referred to the King and Council. Arundel's influence prevailed so far that the royal decision on 17th September, 1411, went in his favour, and the Oxford movement for reform was finally crushed. But as on a previous occasion, the affairs of the University brought the Prince and Archbishop into personal conflict, and perhaps for the second time contributed to a change in the Government.

In foreign politics the Prince's administration had to deal with the attempt to put an end to the Great Schism through the Council of Pisa, and perhaps instituted a new departure in the relations of England with Germany. But of these matters we shall hear more hereafter ‡; and we need not now enter

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 622.

† *Id.*, iii., 624.

‡ See below, pp. 164–166.

further upon them. The state of affairs in France was of more pressing importance, both for general politics and for its influence on Henry's career.

The murder of Louis of Orleans in 1407 for the time made John of Burgundy supreme in France. The King was a mere puppet in his hands, and John was thus able to force his rivals to a formal reconciliation (9th March, 1409). But within six months the young Charles of Orleans married a daughter of the Count of Armagnac, whose name the reconstituted party henceforth adopted. This marriage was followed by an alliance of Orleans and Armagnac with the Dukes of Berri, Bourbon, and Brittany. At last, in July, 1411, Orleans demanded the banishment of Burgundy for his share in the murder of Duke Louis. Formal defiances were exchanged and a regular civil war at once ensued. The Armagnacs were the party of the nobles, of the west and south; Burgundy depended on the burghers, or in other words on Paris and the rich cities of his own dominions in Burgundy, Flanders, and Picardy. Both parties addressed themselves to the English Government. The Armagnacs, it was asserted, begged only that no help might be rendered to their rival.* But whilst the House of Orleans had been consistently hostile to England, Burgundy could appeal to the traditional ties that bound the English to his Flemish subjects. Personally Henry IV. was inclined to peace; and if the decision had rested with him he would probably have endeavoured to steer a middle course between the two French parties. It seems,

* *Chron. St. Denys*, iv., 475.

however, clear that the Prince of Wales took the matter into his own hands; he despatched an embassy to negotiate a marriage with Burgundy's daughter, and a force of twelve hundred Englishmen to assist his intended father-in-law against the Armagnacs.* All this was arranged early in September, and the expedition, which was under the command of the Earl of Arundel, Sir John Oldcastle, and Robert and Gilbert Umfraville, sailed about the end of the month. The English marched from Pontoise in the company of Burgundy on 23rd October. The allies entered Paris a few days later, and on 16th November inflicted a smart defeat on the Armagnacs at the bridge of St. Cloud.† Orleans and his supporters were thus compelled to fall back from before Paris, and in December the English auxiliaries were honourably dismissed. The whole affair was but a small one; still it must have given Henry of Monmouth a valuable insight into the methods and possibilities of English intervention.

However, for the moment this incident was of more importance for its bearing on home politics. We have seen how, in September, 1411, the Prince had come into sharp conflict with his father on questions both of domestic and foreign policy. It would

* *Fœdera*, viii., 698–699. The ambassadors were the Earl of Arundel, Francis de Courte, Lord of Pembroke, Hugh Mortimer, and John Catrik. Both the diplomatic and military chiefs for the most part belonged to the Prince's party. Even Arundel enjoyed the Prince's confidence, but his appointment may have been intended to conciliate the opposition.

† For his share in the victory Gilbert Umfraville seems to have been made Earl of Kyme by the French King.

appear that the dispute was not altogether accidental, but was the outcome of a deliberate design on the part of the Prince and his supporters to secure for themselves the complete control of affairs. Further it is tolerably certain that it was intended (as alleged by more than one chronicler) to procure the King's abdication in favour of his son. The Prince's chief adviser, his uncle Henry Beaufort, was many years later charged in Parliament with having "stirred the Prince to have taken the governance of this reaume, and the crown upon him, his father the same time being King." * Beaufort was content to meet the charge by a general declaration of his loyalty without any specific denial. The existence of such a scheme was no doubt notorious ; it is probable that it was openly discussed when Parliament met on 3rd November, 1411. The King's ill-health was the excuse alleged for the proposal ; but Henry IV. showed himself to be still capable of vigorous action by promptly removing the Prince and his supporters from the Council. The Roll of the Parliament does not give the full truth, but relates merely how on the last day of November the Commons, by their Speaker, begged the King to thank the Prince and other Lords of the Council for their great labours and diligence. The Prince, on behalf of the Council, declared that they had laboured according to their oath to the best of their sense and understanding. The King in reply thanked them very graciously, and said further that he knew well they would have done even better had they been better furnished with

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 298.

supplies; he was well content with their good and loyal diligence during the time they had been of his Council.*

Whatever the face that the politeness of official records might present, the Prince's ministry was undoubtedly dismissed. Hardyng in his chronicle states sufficiently what happened:

"The King discharged the Prince fro his counsaille,
And set my lord Syr Thomas in his stede,
Chief of counsayle for the King's more avayle;
For which the Prince of wrath and wilful hede
Agayne him made debate and froward hede,
With whom the King took parte and helde the felde,
To time the Prince unto the King him yelde." †

The change was a triumph for Archbishop Arundel, supported by the King's second son, Thomas, over the Beauforts, supported by the Prince. The Lord Thomas was little more than a figurehead, whose motives were personal rather than political. He had lately married Margaret, Countess of Somerset, the widow of John Beaufort, who had died in April, 1410. The Bishop of Winchester, as his brother's executor, refused to give Thomas a share of the property to which the latter thought himself entitled; the Prince of Wales supported his uncle, and Thomas in retaliation made alliance with Arundel.

On 5th January, 1412, Thomas Beaufort was succeeded as Chancellor by the Archbishop. A little later Lord le Scrope was replaced as Treasurer by

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 649. † Hardyng, p. 369.

Sir John Pelham, and Henry Beaufort withdrew from the Council. The change of ministry was followed by a complete reversal of foreign policy. The Armagnacs sent an embassy offering to cede Aquitaine as the price of an alliance.* Such a bribe was scarcely needed to convert the new advisers of the English King, and on 18th May a treaty was concluded on these terms.

The Prince of Wales did not submit to his loss of influence without a struggle. When his rivals, not content with securing his dismissal from office, endeavoured to sow discord between him and his father, the young Henry sent messengers throughout England to refute their slanders, and so won the support of many of the chief lords of the realm. Now that a reversal of his French policy was proposed, he came to London on 30th June with such a number of nobles and gentlemen "as had never been seen in our time." The debates between the two parties lasted several days, but the Prince was unable to carry his point.† The Lord Thomas was created Duke of Clarence on 9th July, and two days later was named Lieutenant for the King in Aquitaine. Early in August Clarence, who was accompanied by the Duke of York and Thomas Beaufort (now Earl of Dorset), crossed to Normandy, where his troops speedily overran the Cotentin. But the

* The "*Brut*," or *English Chronicle*, makes a marked distinction between the embassy which came in 1411 "fro the duc of Bourgne vnto the prince of Englond," and that of 1412, when "the duc of Orleaunce sent embassatours into Englond vnto King Henry the iiij." —Harley MS., 2248, ff. 278–279. See also *Chron. Giles*, p. 61.

† Otterbourne, p. 271; *Chron. London*, p.94.

Armagnacs, with shifty policy, were already endeavouring to make terms with their adversaries. Eventually it was arranged that Orleans, who had called the English in, should buy them out; in November Clarence and his troops withdrew under agreement to Aquitaine.

Such a fiasco was in a sense a triumph for the Prince of Wales. Henry had also defeated the machinations of his enemies in England, who had charged him with diverting to his own use the money intended for his soldiers at Calais. The refutation of this slander had been one purpose of his coming to London at the end of June. His opponents were then so far successful that he was at first denied an audience; but at last the King received him and promised that the charge should be investigated in Parliament. The Prince, however, would not let the matter rest thus, and, after proving that he was still owed nearly £1000 for his expenses in Wales and at Calais, obtained a formal declaration of his innocence. Still his enemies persisted in their attempts to sow discord between the members of the royal family. Whether to meet their intrigues, or in the hope of reaping some advantage from the probable failure of Clarence's expedition, on 23rd September the Prince came again to London "to the counseyll with an huge peple." Whilst he was at Westminster a man was discovered one night hiding behind the tapet, or hangings, of his chamber. On being arrested the fellow declared that he had been sent by the Bishop of Winchester to murder the Prince. The Earl of Arundel, who was friendly

both with the Prince and with his uncle the Archbishop, prevented any further damaging disclosures by having the man tied up in a sack and drowned in the Thames.* So the truth of the plot, whether it was a device of the Beaufort party to throw suspicion on the Archbishop, or of the opposite faction to alienate the Prince and Henry Beaufort, never came out. Many years afterwards the Bishop of Winchester indignantly denied the charge, which, as against him, was indeed absurd. We can only now accept the story as evidence of an unwholesome atmosphere of intrigue. If, however, the Prince's opponents built any hopes for their own advantage on the sowing of dissension in the royal family they seem to have been disappointed. It is stated expressly that Henry of Monmouth in spite of all intrigues preserved to the end his father's grace and favour.†

The exertion and excitement of the political crisis told severely on the King's health. In the summer he had indeed talked of commanding the French expedition in person, though he could not walk and could scarcely ride. As his bodily powers failed his thoughts turned again to the ambitions of his youth, and even in November, 1412, King Henry was dreaming that he would go "as far as to the Sepulchre of Christ . . . to chase these pagans on those holy fields." But in December the attacks of his illness grew so severe that at times it seemed as though he were actually dead. However, he

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 298.

† Elmham, *Vita*, p. 11.

recovered sufficiently to keep Christmas at Eltham with some show of jollity. Now that the days of his life were clearly numbered he must have looked back on his stormy career with mingled feelings. If we may credit a late legend he even doubted his rightful title to the crown, but could set no remedy since "my children will not suffer the regalia to go out of our lineage." The same idea comes out in the well-known story of how as the King lay in a trance and seemingly dead, the Prince carried away the crown from his father's bedside. When the King came to himself, and questioned his son as to what had happened, the Prince avowed that he had taken the crown believing that it had become his by right. Then said the King with a sigh: "Fair son, how should you have right thereto? Since as you know well I never had any." "My lord," was the Prince's answer, "as you have kept and guarded it by the sword, so do I intend to guard and defend it all my life." The King answered: "Do as it shall seem good to you; for myself I commit me to God, and pray that He will take me to His mercy."*

It is just possible that this legend may have some basis of truth, for the King's last illness was marked by frequent fainting fits. On 20th March, 1413, he was praying at St. Edward's shrine in Westminster Abbey when one of these attacks seized him. He was removed to the Abbot's house hard by, but never rallied, and died that same evening in a room called the Jerusalem Chamber. Thus was a pro-

* Monstrelet, p. 265; the story first appears in this writer.

phecy fulfilled that foretold how Henry of Bolingbroke should die at Jerusalem.

Henry IV. had ruled as King not without success, and laid the foundations of his new dynasty strongly. But he had sowed for others to reap, and he cannot have looked back on his troubled life with unmixed satisfaction. From his early manhood he had lived in an atmosphere of plot and counterplot. When at last he had seemed to be on the point of triumphing over all his difficulties, he had been stricken with an illness that left him no power to control the forces around him. Still his own peculiar work was done; he had played too great a part in the manifold troubles of the past thirty years to assume the role of the healer of discord, and leader of a united England. This was the inheritance with which he endowed his son, who now entered upon it without any of the embarrassments that had hampered his father's career as King.

"Heaven knows, my son,
By what by-paths, and indirect crook'd ways,
I met this crown; and I myself know well
How troublesome it sat upon my head:
To thee it shall descend with better quiet,
Better opinion, better confirmation;
For all the soil of the achievement goes
With me into the earth."



# CHAPTER VI

## HENRY OF MONMOUTH AND POPULAR TRADITION

WHEN studying the history of Henry of Monmouth as given by sober chroniclers, what strikes us most is that he should have played so great a part at so young an age. As a boy he had served his apprenticeship in arms, and as commander in the field suppressed a serious rebellion; he had hardly reached manhood before he was called to preside over the Government and direct the affairs of the nation. So his strenuous youth had been spent in the battle-field and council-chamber, and it seems difficult to guess when, if ever, he could have found relaxation in pursuits more natural to his years. Popular tradition has a different tale to tell:

> "Since his addiction was to courses vain:
> His companies unletter'd, rude, and shallow;
> His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports."

The contradiction is to all appearance complete; on the one side the evidence of facts is overwhelming; on the other hand the weight of tradition is too great to be lightly put aside. But the problem of

the Prince's character is not insoluble. Henry of Monmouth is no instance of prematurely forced genius. He was precocious only in so far that, like Alexander of Macedon, he possessed naturally the power to rise at once to the level of the responsibilities which circumstances forced upon him. He was reared in no hotbed of artificiality, but in the storm and stress of actual life received a training which ensured the natural though early development of unusual gifts. High-spirited and full of vigour, his enjoyment of life was complete. So in his youth there was no sobriety beyond his years; and when the affairs of state lay heaviest upon him he never lost that common feeling of humanity, which gives to the most heroic characters their greatest power and charm.

Henry's personal appearance has been minutely described by his biographer. He had an oval, handsome face with a broad, open forehead and straight nose, ruddy cheeks and lips, a deeply indented chin, and small well-formed ears; his hair was brown and thick; and his bright hazel eyes, gentle as a dove's when at rest, could gleam like a lion's when roused to wrath. In stature he was above the average, and his frame, with its comely, well-knit limbs, was that of a man accustomed to active pursuits. He rejoiced in all kinds of sports and exercise, had no equal in jumping, and was so swift of foot that with one or two chosen companions he would start the quickest buck from the woodland and run it down in the open.*

* *Versus Rythmici*, 69–88; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 12; Livius, p. 4.

Though his education in the narrower sense had been brief, it had not been neglected. He had some tincture of Latin, and could write a manly, straightforward letter alike in French and in English. He had a natural taste for music, had been taught to play the harp, and in the eyes of his biographer devoted too much of his leisure to musical instruments. But he could find time for more serious pursuits; he was fond of reading, not only works on hunting* and goodly tales, of which, says Hoccleve, he had insight to judge, but also chronicles and even theology. Amongst the books which his executors returned after his death were *The Chronicle of Jerusalem* and *The Journey of Godfrey de Bouillon*, which he had borrowed from the Countess of Westmoreland; and "a large book containing all the works of St. Gregory," which had been the property of Archbishop Arundel. So Shakespeare may have had some justice in making Chichele declare:

> "Hear him but reason in divinity,
> You would desire the king were made a prelate."

He was fond too of poetry; a copy of Chaucer's *Troilus*, with his arms as Prince embossed on the cover, is still preserved. The poets of his own day enjoyed his favour; Hoccleve called him "his good master," and dedicated his *Regiment of Princes* to

* For twelve books on hunting purchased for Henry's use see Devon, *Issues of Exchequer*, p. 368.

him, whilst Lydgate wrote for him the *Life of Our Lady* and *The Siege of Troy*. Men of learning also profited by his patronage. Thomas Rudborn and John Carpenter, afterwards Bishops of St. David's and Worcester, owed their early advancement to him. The learned Carmelites, Stephen Patrington and Thomas Netter of Walden, were successively his confessors; it was at Henry's request that the latter wrote his monumental defence of the Catholic faith. All these, like the Prince's other friend, Richard Courtenay, were Oxford scholars, and this so far favours the tradition that Henry himself had spent some time in that University. Even his favourite comrades in the Welsh wars were not unlettered soldiers, but sober, thoughtful men like Oldcastle, Roger Acton, and John Greindor, who, if they could not convert him to their unorthodox beliefs, must have exercised a serious influence upon him. His London boon companions were probably no dissolute roysterers like Shakespeare's Poins and Bardolph, but rather perhaps that "Court of Good Company" of which Hoccleve and Henry Somer, the friend of Chaucer, were among the principal members.

Of Henry's personal character we have had already some illustrations. When in authority he was keen and diligent in the discharge of his duties, though perhaps his abounding zeal and energy inclined him to gather too much into his own hands. Still his conduct during Arundel's periods of rule seems to show that he had some power of self-effacement, and the politic prudence to abide his time. He was

quick to resent anything that cast a doubt on his personal honour; but, as his behaviour during his father's last years shows, was free from malice. He could win and retain the loyal services of those about him, for his power as Prince rested on the personal fidelity of his supporters. In return he showed himself a true and faithful friend to those who gained his favour, as witness his chivalrous defence of York at Gloucester in 1407, his steady support of Richard Courtenay at Oxford, and his advancement of Oldcastle. The dark spot on his character so far had been the terrible scene at Badby's execution; but even there we can trace his longing for mercy as well as the sternness of his justice and orthodoxy.

In 1406, the Commons expressed their view of the Prince's character in an address to the King through the mouth of their Speaker, Sir John Tiptoft.

"Sir John made commendation of the goodness and virtue that reposed in the honourable person of my lord Prince, and especially of the humbleness and obedience that he shows towards Our Sovereign Lord the King his father. Secondly he praised him for the good heart and courage wherewith God hath endowed him. And in the third place for a great virtue which God hath bestowed on him that, whatever purpose he may entertain to the best of his understanding, yet for the great trust that he hath in his Council he conforms graciously to their ordinance, abandoning wholly his own wishes. Wherefrom it is like, by God's grace, that great good, comfort, honour and profit will come hereafter." *

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 574.

There may be something of formal flattery in the speech, but it seems hypercritical to put it down either to simplicity or irony on Tiptoft's part.* The final remarks are so unnecessary to the immediate purpose, that we may accept them justly as a frank recognition of the young Prince's readiness to think and act for himself. Even in the crisis of six years later, Henry of Monmouth showed that he could submit his will to that of another, whilst still maintaining his own opinion. The truth seems to be that the attempt to sow any permanent dissension between the Prince and King signally failed. Whatever his faults, Henry of Monmouth never entered on any course of active disloyalty to his father; the suggested abdication was grounded on the King's apparent incapacity, and even if it was openly proposed there was certainly no serious effort to give it practical effect. The popular tradition of the Prince's wildness touches only his personal character; his political role as a leader of opposition rests on an exaggerated view of historical facts.

Henry of Monmouth was for a century and more the peculiar darling of popular fancy. It was not merely his glorious reign, contrasting so sharply with subsequent disgrace and discord, but also the charm of his own personality that filled men's minds. In the traditional stories of Henry's youth there is nothing unwholesome; we have presented to us only the boisterous horse-play of a high-spirited boy, and whilst the stories have not suffered in the telling, the most notable of them all redounds in the end to

* As does Ramsay, i., 100.

the Prince's credit. It was his frank, hearty temper that gave Henry such a hold on the affection of his subjects; it is the same spirit, exaggerated to suit the vulgar taste, that is reflected in the legends of his youth.

The historians of Henry's own time record that his conduct as Prince was marked by levity, and that a sharp change took place on his accession to the throne. His professed eulogist * says:

"The Prince was in his youth an assiduous cultor of lasciviousness, and addicted exceedingly to instruments of music. Passing the bounds of modesty, he was the fervent soldier of Venus as well as of Mars; youthlike, he was fired with her torches, and in the midst of the worthy works of war found leisure for the excesses common to ungoverned age."

This is mere rhetoric, but the more sober Walsingham † declares:

"As soon as he was made King he was changed suddenly into another man, zealous for honesty, modesty and gravity; there being no sort of virtue that he was not anxious to display."

In like manner, an English chronicler ‡ writes:

"He was a noble king after he was prince and crowned; howbeit before in his youth he had been wild, reckless, and spared nothing of his lusts nor desires,

* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 12.

† *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 290.

‡ *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 11ro. See also Hardyng, p. 372, and Otterbourne, p. 273.

but accomplished them after his liking ; but as soon as he was crowned, anointed and sacred, anon suddenly he changed into a new man, and all his intent was to live virtuously in maintaining of Holy Church, destroying of heretics, keeping justice, and defending of his realm and subjects."

In these statements we have the originals of the later legends, in which the King's unthrifty son is made with his loose companions to frequent London taverns, beating the watch and robbing passers-by. It is perhaps a mere coincidence that Dame Quickly's tavern of the Boar's Head in Eastcheap was near at hand to the Prince's mansion of the Coldharbour. But it is just these tales of London rioting that are corroborated most nearly in history. On 23rd June, 1410, the King's sons Thomas and John, being at supper in Eastcheap after midnight, got quarrelling so hotly with the men of the town that the Mayor and Sheriffs were roused in haste to quell the turmoil. A year later again "the Lord Thomas' men" were parties to a great debate in the city.* This was the groundwork, no doubt, of a scene in the old play, *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (a popular piece much older than Shakespeare's three histories); wherein the Prince, after a riot in Eastcheap, is taken to prison at the Counter.

Let us turn to the most famous of all the legends of Henry's youth, the story of his quarrel with Chief Justice Gascoigne. This story, which has so

* *Chron. London*, p. 93. Cf. *Gregory's Chronicle*, p. 106 : "The hurlynge in Estechepe by the lorde Thomas and the lorde John."

implanted itself in popular fancy, has, however, no sound authority and makes its first appearance more than a century later. Sir Thomas Elyot, who was the son of a judge, and himself a lawyer and diplomatist of some little distinction, as well as a man of culture and learning, published in 1531 a "*Boke named the Gouernour.*" The purpose of this work was, "to instruct men in such virtues as shall be expedient for them, which shall have authority in a weal public, and to educate those youths that hereafter may be deemed worthy to be governors." In one of his discourses, Elyot cites the story of Henry and the Chief Justice as instancing "a good Judge, a good Prince, and a good King." "*The Governor*" had, as will be observed, a didactic and not an historical purpose; but it is just possible that Elyot may be reproducing some legend of the courts, with which as a lawyer he had become familiar. We will take the tale in Elyot's own words:

"The most renowned Prince, King Henry the Fifth, late King of England, during the life of his father was noted to be fierce and of wanton courage. It happened that one of his servants whom he favoured well, was for felony by him committed, arraigned at the King's Bench; whereof the Prince being advertised, and incensed by light persons about him, in furious rage came hastily to the bar, where his servant stood as a prisoner, and commanded him to be ungyved and set at liberty. Whereat all men were abashed, reserved the Chief Justice, who humbly exhorted the Prince to be contented that his servant might be ordered, according to

the ancient laws of this Realm: or if he would have him saved from the rigour of the laws, that he should obtain, if he might, of the King his gracious pardon, whereby no Law or Justice should be derogate.

"With which answer the Prince nothing appeased, but rather more inflamed, endeavoured himself to take away his servant. The Judge considering the perilous example and inconvenience that might thereby ensue, with a valiant spirit and courage commanded the Prince upon his allegiance to leave the prisoner and depart his way; at which commandment the Prince being set all in a fury, all chafed, and in a terrible manner, came up to the place of judgment, men thinking that he would have slain the Judge, or have done to him some damage. But the Judge sitting still without moving, declaring the majesty of the King's place of judgment, and with an assured and bold countenance had to the Prince these words following:

"'Sir, remember your self, I keep here the place of the King your sovereign lord and father, to whom ye owe double obedience: wherefore eftsoon in his name, I charge you to desist of your wilfulness and unlawful enterprise, and from henceforth give good example to those which shall hereafter be your proper subjects. And now, for your contempt and disobedience, go you to the prison of the King's Bench, whereunto I commit you, and remain ye there prisoner until the pleasure of the King your father be further known.' With which words being abashed, and also wondering at the marvellous gravity of that worshipful Justice, the noble Prince laying his weapon apart, doing reverence departed and went to the King's Bench as he was commanded. Whereat his servants disdayned, came and shewed to the King all the whole affair, whereat he a

whiles studying, after as a man all ravished with gladness, holding his eyes and hands up towards heaven, abraided with a loud voice: 'O merciful God, how much am I bound to your infinite goodness, specially for that you have given me a judge, who feareth not to minister Justice, and also a son who can suffer semblably and obey Justice.'"

The story thus published at once obtained popularity, and Robert Redmayne,* in his *Life of Henry V.*, written a few years later, makes reference to it, alleging that the Prince struck the judge, and connecting the incident with Henry's dismissal from the Council. Hall in 1542 and Holinshed, some thirty years later, give a like account with like additions. Contemporaneous with Holinshed's chronicle was *The Famous Victories of Henry V.*, in which play a scene is devoted to the incident of the Prince and the Chief Justice. Shakespeare, without introducing the story in his own plays, makes reference to it and adds some final embellishments. The Chief Justice is the nobleman who "committed the Prince for striking him about Bardolph," and is filled with apprehensions at the accession of the new King; he does not, however, forget his dignity, and Henry, mindful of his own new state, bids him:

"Still bear the balance and the sword."

Thus the whole story is completed without any

* Redmayne the historian is probably identical with Robert Redman the printer, who died in 1540. His *Life* was probably written after 1536. See Cole's *Memorials of Henry the Fifth*, p. ix. Redmayne's *Life* was not printed till forty years ago.



JUDGE GASCOIGNE.

FROM HIS TOMB.

explicit mention of Sir William Gascoigne by name. But Gascoigne was Chief Justice of the King's Bench nearly the whole of the reign of Henry IV.; if therefore there is any truth in the tale, it is of him that it must be told. With Gascoigne's known character as an upright and fearless judge, it would indeed fit well; he had boldly declared that the King, as Duke of Lancaster, could be sued "like any common person," and refused, as it is alleged, to have any share in the trial of Archbishop Scrope. On the accession of Henry V., his patent as Chief Justice was not renewed; a circumstance which has been argued to prove that he had incurred the King's enmity. But such a theory is needless and lacks all authority; Gascoigne's age—he was close on seventy—is enough to account for his resignation of office, and he was in fact treated with favour by the King till his death in honourable retirement in December, 1419.

So may we leave the legend of the Prince and the Chief Justice as a pretty tale fitted not inappropriately to two historical persons.

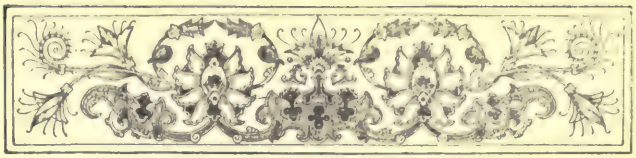
The character who plays the greatest part in the company of Shakespeare's Prince Hal is entirely the poet's creation. Originally, both in *The Famous Victories* and in Shakespeare's own plays, the Prince's boon companion was called Oldcastle; but when the plays were printed the name of Falstaff was substituted in deference to the feelings of Henry, Lord Cobham. When the stout old knight met his end "a babbled of green fields"; but "Oldcastle died a martyr and this is not the man."

Falstaff is in name a hazy reminiscence of Sir John Fastolf, a reputable soldier, who as a young man was in the service of Thomas, Duke of Clarence, incurred somewhat unjustly the imputation of cowardice at the battle of Patay in 1429, and owned the Boar's Head Inn in Eastcheap. To this slender foundation Shakespeare's great creation must trace its origin. The character no doubt commenced in the traditional scandal that attached to the Prince's name through his sometime friendship for the unpopular Lollard leader. Is it too much to suggest that part at least of the Prince's own supposed misconduct is to be traced to the same source? Henry's political opponents were Oldcastle's religious persecutors; we know that they did not show themselves at all scrupulous in their methods for his defamation. The historians who charge Henry with wildness as Prince, find his peculiar merit as King in the maintaining of Holy Church and destroying of heretics. There is no sufficient reason to question Henry's orthodoxy in religion at any time of his life, but he did not escape without some aspersions.* It is probable that his religious attitude after his accession to the throne was a blow to Lollard hopes; perhaps it was somewhat of a surprise to his political opponents. Did his "change suddenly into a new man" mean no more than this?

It is likely enough that the legends of Henry's riotous youth had some foundation of fact; but at the most they point only to youthful indiscretion.

* Thomas Netter, his confessor, is said to have rebuked him for his slackness towards the Lollards early in his reign.

Certainly they leave no serious blemish on the Prince's character, which indeed they help to illustrate. They give life and warmth to what would be otherwise a somewhat colourless and dim personality. They enable us to see Henry as he really was: frank, generous, and warm-hearted; steadfast and self-reliant; not taking life sadly, but not unmindful of its serious side; not old before his time, but ready for responsibility when it came upon him—in short, by disposition as he was by birth, the most English of our Plantagenet kings, heart and soul in sympathy with his subjects, marked out by nature to be the leader of a united nation.



# CHAPTER VII

## THE RESTORATION OF DOMESTIC PEACE

### 1413–1414

HENRY the Fifth assumed the crown in a spirit of calm self-confidence. With a full belief in his own right and capacity to govern, he was equally sensible of the sacred trust imposed upon him. The night after his father's death was spent with a holy recluse at Westminster in prayerful preparation for his new duties. On the following morning he was formally proclaimed, and at once undertook the direction of the government. A Parliament had been summoned to meet before the late King's death, and many of the chief persons of the realm were consequently assembled in London. They took the opportunity thus afforded to tender their homage to the new King before his coronation. Henry received them graciously, and by the favour which he showed to all alike made manifest his intention to forget the unhappy differences of the past; with a solemn protestation he declared his desire to rule only for the honour of God and welfare of his kingdom.



THE CORONATION OF HENRY V.

FROM A BAS-RELIEF IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

On Friday, the 7th April, the King came riding in state from Kingston to the Tower. That evening a great banquet was held, at which the King was served by fifty young nobles, who were to be knighted upon the morrow. On the Saturday morning the King dubbed his new Knights of the Bath, and in the afternoon rode in solemn procession through the city to Westminster. Next day — it was Passion Sunday — Henry was crowned in the Abbey by Archbishop Arundel, and held his coronation feast in Westminster Hall. One circumstance alone marred the festivities. The day was cold and stormy, with heavy showers of snow. But though some interpreted this to forebode a reign of chilling severity, others accepted it hopefully as an omen that the winter was past and a more fruitful season come.

On the very first day of his reign, the King had made Henry Beaufort his Chancellor in place of Archbishop Arundel. The only other change of importance was the appointment of the Earl of Arundel to be Treasurer in place of Sir John Pelham. The Earl had been always on good terms with Henry, but nevertheless the two appointments in a sense balanced each other. The new King desired to reign, not through any one party, but as the accepted head of an undivided nation.

Fortune in some degree favoured Henry's designs. Most of the leaders in the late unquiet times were dead, and the young men of the new generation had no past to embarrass them. First came the King's three brothers. Thomas of Clarence was a gallant

soldier, who had spent some time in Ireland as Lieutenant for his father, and in 1405, when just seventeen, been Admiral of the Fleet in the Channel. Clarence's recent political opposition to his brother had created no personal animosity; at the present moment he was absent in Aquitaine, though he returned home during the summer. John, the second brother, had served a long apprenticeship on the Scottish border, and was still Warden of the East March; in character and abilities he most resembled the King, and in after years through his statesmanlike qualities became Henry's right hand in England. Humphrey, the youngest, had as yet no experience of public affairs; whether from lack of training or want of stability, he achieved no success either as soldier or statesman. Henry V. measured his capacity and never trusted him fully. Still Humphrey was a cultured and courtly prince, who shared his eldest brother's taste for literature and became a munificent patron of learning.* John and Humphrey were created Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester by their brother at Leicester in 1414. The King's two sisters had long been married; Blanche to Louis of Bavaria, Count Palatine of the Rhine, in 1402 (she had died in 1409); and Philippa to Eric of Denmark in 1406. His stepmother, Queen Joanna, the daughter of Charles the Bad of Navarre and widow of John IV. of Brittany, was on friendly terms with the children of her second husband.

Next in importance to the King's brothers came

*Of the three princes, Thomas was born in 1388 (before 30th September), John in June, 1389, and Humphrey in February, 1391.

the Beauforts, his uncles and political tutors. Henry, who had been Bishop of Winchester since 1404, was more of a statesman than an ecclesiastic; he was a wise but ambitious man, and his nephew's most loyal and trusted adviser. Thomas, now Earl of Dorset, was a capable soldier and politician. Both the brothers were still in the prime of life, and devoted heart and soul to the interests of the House of Lancaster.

At the head of the other princes of the blood was Edward, Duke of York, whose old treasons were forgotten in his loyalty to the new King. York's brother Richard, whom Henry made Earl of Cambridge in 1414, was a weak man of no principle, but derived some slight importance from his marriage to the sister of the Earl of March. Edmund of March himself was warmly attached to his cousin the King, whose ward he had been; he was a young man of good parts, with no ambition to assert his claims to the throne.

Among the greater nobles the only men of proved experience, besides Thomas Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, were the Earls of Westmoreland and Warwick. Westmoreland was head of the House of Neville, and since the defection of the Percies had been the mainstay of the Lancastrian cause in the North; his wife was the King's aunt, Joan Beaufort. Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was a true knight errant; though barely thirty years old he had fought at Shrewsbury and in the Welsh war, and had won high repute as a crusader in the East. The Earls of Devonshire and Suffolk were honourable nobles of no special distinction. John Mowbray, the Earl

Marshal, had been too young to share his brother's treason in 1405; he was nephew to the Earl of Arundel, and son-in-law of Westmoreland. Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, the sons of the men who suffered for Richard II. in 1400, had just reached manhood. Richard de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was their contemporary. Humphrey, Earl of Stafford, and Henry Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, the King's cousins, were mere boys; whilst the young heir of Northumberland was an exile in Scotland.

Chief among the lesser nobility were Richard Grey of Codnor, a trusty servant of the Crown; Thomas, Lord Camoys, a soldier of proved experience, who was married to Hotspur's widow; Sir John Cornwall, afterwards Lord Fanhope, husband to the King's aunt Elizabeth; Henry FitzHugh, who was made the King's chamberlain; Henry le Scrope of Masham, a bosom friend of the King; and last but not least, Sir John Oldcastle, who was Lord Cobham in his wife's right.

At the head of the clergy came Archbishop Arundel, now fast approaching the close of his long career. Of the other bishops the most prominent, besides Henry Beaufort, were Henry Chichele of St. David's, Thomas Langley of Durham, and Robert Hallam of Salisbury. Chichele was a warm friend of the King, and Arundel's destined successor at Canterbury. Langley, who had been Chancellor from 1405 to 1407, was a prudent and capable official of the Beaufort party. Hallam had represented his Church and country at the Council of Pisa in 1409, and during

the next few years was to play a still greater part at Constance.

The first Parliament of Henry V. met on 15th May, 1413. Writs had been issued before the late King's death; but the Parliament had been held to be dissolved by that event, and a fresh summons went out on 23rd March. The course of the session was in no way remarkable, though it illustrates sufficiently the sound basis on which parliamentary government was now established. The Commons made their grant of supplies on conditions, though with reasonable liberality. The customs on wool were granted for four years, the Tonnage and Poundage for a twelvemonth only, with a subsidy of a fifteenth and a tenth for the coming year. A sum of £10,000 was preferentially appropriated for the maintenance of the King's own estate. Henry's attention was directed to the urgent need for better government, the safeguarding of the sea, and the proper defence of the Marches of Wales and Scotland, of Ireland, Calais, and Guienne. The Commons marked their sense of their own position as the national representatives by provisions for parliamentary elections; electors and elected alike were to be restricted to those persons who were actually resident within the county or borough concerned. The King, on his part, showed tactful discretion; in most matters he was ready to meet the Commons half-way; he accorded his assent to the customary anti-papal petitions, but gave only a qualified approval to some further proposals curtailing the privileges of the Church. Any novel departure in legislation at this

moment was ill-timed, and might have proved disastrous to the King's domestic policy.

The key-notes of that policy were moderation and oblivion of the past. Its intention was marked by a succession of acts of clemency. The young Earl of March was released from his honourable custody, and, together with the Earl Marshal, brother of the Earl who suffered with Archbishop Scrope, was restored to his place in Parliament. Scrope himself received a sort of posthumous pardon in the licence granted for offerings at his tomb. It was the same policy that a little later prompted the restoration of Hotspur's son to the Earldom of Northumberland. But the most striking act of all was the bringing of King Richard's remains from their resting-place at Langley, to be solemnly interred in the tomb which he had prepared for himself by the side of Queen Anne, his wife, at Westminster. It was a sign that the old enmities were to be buried and put away. On Henry's own part it was also an act of grateful reverence to the friend of his youth, whose memory he cherished like that of a father.

There was, however, one party whom the King could not conciliate. Henry's manifest orthodoxy had disappointed the hopes of the Lollards, whose discontent now came rapidly to a crisis. The messenger who brought the news of the King's accession to France reported that many in England favoured the Earl of March, and that a civil war was likely to ensue.* Early in the reign there was also discovered a conspiracy to bring in the pretended King

**Chron. St. Denys*, iv., 770–772.

Richard from Scotland. Subsequent events make it probable that such projects were merely the cloak for Lollard intrigues. How little Henry regarded them was proved by the release of Mortimer, and by the respect shown to Richard's memory. His politic conduct did much to rob disloyalty of its pretext, but was powerless against the more serious forces that lay behind.

As on previous occasions, it was the religious zeal of Archbishop Arundel that brought matters to a head. After his victory over the University in September, 1411, the Archbishop had renewed his proceedings at Oxford. His influence was now too great to be withstood and the moderate party gave way, whilst reformers of pronounced opinions had to leave the University. This did not tend to diminish the difficulties of the Government, for the Lollard scholars spread their doctrines, both religious and political, throughout the country all the more.

Sir John Oldcastle had harboured Lollard preachers on his estates since 1410, and he was probably the secret supporter of these new emissaries. At all events his heresy was so notorious that the Convocation which met in 1413 took open action against him. In the course of a diligent search for Lollard writings a volume that belonged to Oldcastle was found at a "limner's" shop in "Paternoster Rowe." Its contents appeared so convincing that they were brought under the King's notice. Henry was greatly shocked at the views expressed; but, mindful of his old friendship, begged Arundel and

the bishops to hold their hands till he had tried his personal influence. Oldcastle, whilst declaring himself most willing to obey the King, and to submit to him "all his fortune in this world," was firm in the maintenance of his religious beliefs. Exhortation and rebukes were alike in vain, and Oldcastle fled from the Court at Windsor to his own castle at Cowling. A few days later Henry gave his sanction to formal proceedings against Oldcastle, and on 22nd August issued a general proclamation against the unlicensed Lollard preachers. Sir John refused to obey Arundel's repeated citations, and it was under a royal writ that he was produced before the Archbishop's Court on 23rd September. To his judges (Henry Beaufort and Richard Clifford, Bishop of London, sat with Arundel), Oldcastle read a confession of faith. He declared his belief in all the sacraments, and that the sacrament of the altar was Christ's body in the form of bread; he also acknowledged the necessity of penance and true confession. But to put hope, faith, or trust in the help of images was the great sin of idolatry; and a man might go on pilgrimage to all the world and yet be damned. Arundel, who it would seem desired sincerely to find a way for escape, admitted that there was much both Catholic and good in this statement; he required, however, further answers as to the doctrines of the real presence and auricular confession. On these points Oldcastle refused to commit himself, and he was thereupon remanded with a severe warning as to the probable consequences.

The court met again on 25th September; amongst

its assessors on this occasion was the Carmelite friar, Thomas Netter of Walden, afterwards the King's confessor. Oldcastle refused plainly to assent to the orthodox doctrine of the sacrament as stated by the bishops. Nor would he admit that confession to a priest was essential to salvation. The argument between the accused and his judges was long and hot. At last Oldcastle burst forth in reply to Netter: "I say what I said before, the Pope and you together make up the great Antichrist, of whom he is the Head, you bishops, priests, prelates and monks are the Body, and the begging friars the Tail, who cover all your lewdness with their sophistry." Arundel made a final appeal to him to "look to it in time, for within a few moments it will be in vain." But the knight was firm that he could not believe otherwise than he had before declared. Then the court convicted him as a bold maintainer of heresy against the faith and religion of the Holy Roman and Universal Church, and delivered him to the secular jurisdiction to be put to death.*

Henry was still anxious if possible to save his old friend and comrade in arms, and granted him a respite of forty days. But before the time expired Oldcastle escaped from the Tower, and took refuge in the house of one William Fisher,† a parchment-maker in Smithfield. A contemporary writer,‡ remarking upon the long immunity from arrest that

* *Fœdera*, ix., 61–66; Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii., 351–357.

† *Gesta*, pp. 3, 4; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 296. The latter author gives Arundel the credit of this moderation.

‡ Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 299.

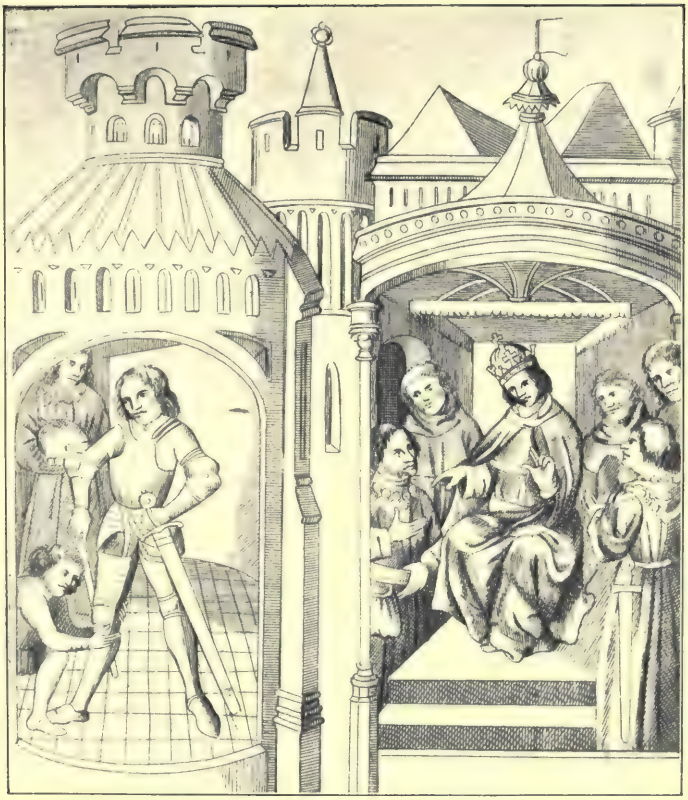
Oldcastle enjoyed, argues justly to the wide-spread popularity of Lollard opinions. The situation was not the less serious from the circumstance that Oldcastle's supporters were drawn chiefly from the commoners, and especially from the prosperous middle class of London and other towns.

It is probable that Henry's anxiety to avoid extremities was due in part to his recognition of the serious danger of a political upheaval. Oldcastle's trial had caused great alarm among his supporters. By breaking out of prison he had committed himself irretrievably to a policy of treason. His own position was now desperate, and under his guidance the Lollard movement made alliance with all who were hostile to the existing order: with the friends of Mortimer, and the partisans of the pretended Richard II., and even with the Scots and rebel Welsh.

Now that the crisis was unavoidable Henry met it with his wonted prudence and courage. There was probably something of deliberate policy in his choice of this moment for the celebration of King Richard's reinterment. The course of events shows that the King was well informed as to what was going on; the conspiracy was allowed to gather to a head and at the right moment was dealt with promptly.

The first design of the Lollards was to have made a "momming" on Twelfth-night at Eltham, where the King held his Christmas Court, and under colour thereof to have seized Henry and his brothers.*

* *Gregory's Chronicle*, p.108.



HENRY V. AND HIS COUNCIL.

This plot was frustrated by a sudden removal to Westminster. The Lollards had flocked towards London from all parts of the country intending, after they had seized the King and his brothers, to overthrow the existing order and establish some sort of commonwealth with Oldcastle as its head.* A great gathering, at which it was said twenty thousand Lollards were to be present, was fixed for St. Giles's Fields between London and Westminster on the night of 9th January, when the city apprentices were to rise in arms. Henry, warned of their "false purpose," had the gates barred and watched, and himself went to the Fields at the head of an armed force. The would-be insurgents, finding the ground already occupied, dispersed in haste; and, though Oldcastle escaped, many other of their leaders were taken prisoners. Thirty-seven conspirators, none of them persons of note, were summarily tried and executed. A little later Sir Roger Acton, who was next to Oldcastle in the conspiracy, met a like fate. Oldcastle got safe away; and in spite of a large reward offered for his arrest, continued for four years to be a mysterious agent in whatever treason was afoot:

> "Under colour of suche lollyng
> To shape sodeyn surreccioun
> Agaynst our liege lord Kynge
> With fals imagynacioun."†

The vigour which Henry displayed on this

* *Fœdera*, ix., 170, 171; *Rolls of Parliament*, iv. 15.

† *Political Songs*, ii., 247.

occasion had secured him an almost bloodless victory. The advantage thus gained was used with equal promptitude. On the second day after the meeting in St. Giles's Fields a proclamation went out to the sheriffs of all counties ordering them to take measures for the arrest of Lollards. But on 28th March, when a fitting interval had elapsed, a general pardon was promised to all but a few ringleaders, who were excepted by name.* This second proclamation was expressly declared to be issued on no man's petition but of the King's own motion, out of regard to the many persons who, though led astray by bad advice, were themselves sufficiently loyal.

The recent disturbances were, not unnaturally, the first subject recommended for the consideration of the Parliament which met at Leicester on 30th April. The Chancellor in his opening speech declared the King's firm purpose to maintain the Christian faith as necessary to a well-ordered state. In the opinion of the Government the question had become a political one, and was therefore to be dealt with by the secular authority. All the officers of the Crown, from the Chancellor downwards, were now directed by statute "to exert their entire pains and diligence to oust, cease and destroy all manner heresies and errors vulgarly called Lollardies." † This measure was not based on a petition of the

* *Fœdera*, ix., 89, 119, 129; the third of these documents was a pardon to certain individuals granted on 20th May. The persons named include only one knight besides Oldcastle; there are several "clerks," but the great majority belong to the mercantile class. Cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 193, 194, for a later pardon.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 15, 24.

Commons, and was no doubt due to the direct initiative of the King and his Council.

Henry's anxiety for a firm and orderly government was shown also in two other measures recommended by the Chancellor to Parliament. The first was to provide for the better keeping of peace on the high seas; the second dealt with the rioters and malefactors who infested various parts of the country, and particularly the Northern Marches. But although the principal legislation of the session owed its inspiration to the King, this was not due to any lack of independence on the part of the Commons. The great constitutional principle, that statutes should be enacted in the terms of the petitions on which they were based, was successfully asserted. Henry, on his side, showed that a high sense of his rights did not blind him to his duties as a constitutional ruler. He granted freely that nothing should be enacted whereby the Commons should be bound without their assent, "saving always to our liege lord his royal prerogative to grant and deny what him lust of their petitions and askings."* For this recognition of their position as "Assenters" and not merely "Petitioners" the Commons had striven in vain during the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. The concession was of vital importance to the future welfare of Parliament. It has also a narrower significance for the moment at which it was made. It affords the most convincing proof that the Parliament which obtained it was no mere instrument for registering the King's

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 22.

wishes; and that the King, who granted it, understood the importance to his government of the good-will of the governed.

Thus in the first year of his reign was Henry called upon to deal with a domestic crisis of the most serious character. In meeting it he had shown forbearance without weakness, and promptitude without panic; he had exercised justice with swift severity, but had tempered it with timely mercy. His amnesty for the past and his dealings with two Parliaments had marked him as a ruler who could trust and be trusted. It would be absurd to suppose that he had in so brief a time appeased all the surviving elements of discontent. Much had, however, been accomplished, and the great body of the nation must have recognised that in Henry they possessed a prince who not only knew how to govern, but could win and deserve the confidence of his subjects.



# CHAPTER VIII

## THREATENINGS OF WAR

### 1413–1415

SHAKESPEARE, following the chroniclers of the sixteenth century, ascribes the war with France to the designs of the higher clergy, who thought by this means to prevent a revival of those projects of Church reform which had been mooted in the previous reign. The theory that the bishops encouraged Henry V. to challenge his rights in France, so that he might not seek occasion to enter upon such matters as the alienation of ecclesiastical property, was first advanced by an English writer of the following generation.* In the next century it was further developed by Redmayne and Hall, or by some contemporary, to whom the circumstances of their time made it acceptable. At the Parliament of Leicester in 1414, so goes their history, the Wycliffite proposals for a confiscation of Church goods were revived; Chichele, as Archbishop of Canterbury, thereupon rose in his place and in a set speech stirred up the King to war with France. The official

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. ii$^{vo}$.

record of that Parliament gives, however, no hint that any such proposals were brought forward, or that the prospects of war with France were then discussed. Nor indeed was Chichele yet Archbishop; for though Arundel had died in February, the appointment of his successor was not completed till after the dissolution of the Parliament. On the other hand, it is true that Chichele gave a loyal support to the policy of his master; and that under his guidance the clergy showed themselves generous in providing means for the prosecution of the war. It is not impossible that King and Archbishop may have felt that a spirited foreign policy would afford a wholesome vent to the humours of the late "scambling and unquiet time." Still there is no necessity to attribute to either of them so Macchiavellian a policy, and it not likely that this was their only or principal motive.

The idea of war with France was not unpopular. The old traditional and commercial intercourse that bound England to Flanders and Gascony, the northern and southern enemies of the central power at Paris, favoured it; it was fostered also by the mutual piracy of the maritime populations on either side of the Channel.* The long dispute between the two nations was still unsettled, and the recent actions of the French Government had given the English good cause for complaint. To Henry himself, with his high belief in his own rights, the as-

* In the first year of Henry's reign, English adventurers burnt Dieppe, and afterwards, seemingly with the King's approval, sacked Tréport.—*Chron. St. Denys.* v., 69.

sertion of his claim to the throne of France must have appeared almost in the light of a duty. Possibly he may, even now, have had other motives, and dreamt that when Western Europe was united under his sway, he would restore the unity of the Church and become the leader of Christendom in a new Crusade.

However this may be, it is certain that from the beginning of his reign Henry contemplated the likelihood of armed intervention in France. The course of events in that country made such a policy more than ever possible. In April, 1413, the Burgundian faction in Paris, fearing that power was slipping from their hands, had established a reign of terror under a leader named Caboche. But the atrocities of the "Cabochiens" so alienated the more moderate *bourgeoisie* that a few months later the Armagnac princes were able to re-enter Paris, and Burgundy fled in discredit to Flanders. The poor mad King was of no account; and his son the Dauphin was a weak and worthless youth, who wearied of both parties in turn and presently called in Burgundy to his aid. So in 1414 northern France was again devastated by civil war. The Armagnacs had the advantage on this occasion of being able to use the royal name, and in the autumn besieged Burgundy at Arras. Eventually, by the intervention of the Flemings, a compromise was arranged. John the Fearless was left to rule his own estates, but swore to conclude no treaty with England without the King's consent. The central government rested with the Dauphin and his

favourites, so far as the turbulent Armagnac nobility would allow them to exercise it.

Under such circumstances the only problem for the English Government was to decide from which party they could obtain the most advantage. Henry himself, supported by Bedford and the Beauforts, favoured a Burgundian alliance; Clarence not unnaturally looked to the Armagnacs, and was supported by his brother Humphrey, as well as by the Duke of York. In July, 1413, whilst the Burgundian party still held power in Paris, Henry Chichele and the Earl of Warwick had been appointed to treat both for a renewal of the truce with France and for an arrangement with Burgundy as concerned his own dominions.* The negotiations were conducted at Leulinghen, near Calais, in September, and resulted in an extension of the truce for Picardy and Flanders. About the same time Edward of York was at Paris on his way home from Aquitaine, and there opened proposals with the Armagnacs for a marriage between Henry and the French King's daughter Catherine. Eventually it was arranged that the Government at Paris should send an embassy to treat in England.

On 19th December the French ambassadors reached London†; at their head was the Archbishop of Bourges, a proud and eloquent man but no diplomatist. The English representatives, of whom the chief were the Bishop of Durham and the Earl of Warwick, were commissioned, as it would appear, to assert their master's claims to the throne of France

* *Fœdera*, ix., 34–36.

† *Chron. London*, p. 97.

in full. The French ambassadors pleaded that they had no power to treat of such a matter. Nevertheless, on 24th January a truce, to last till 2nd February, 1415, was concluded, and Henry pledged himself to make no other alliance pending the proposal for his marriage with Catherine of France.*

The Armagnac Government was quite unable to appreciate the situation. Henry's demands were no doubt extravagant, but the derision with which they were received at Paris was absurd. The Dauphin, with childish humour, before his ambassadors were actually returned, sent a message to Henry that he was over-young and too tender of age to make any war, and with it he sent him a tun full of tennis-balls that he and his lords might have something to play with.† Henry replied merrily that he would soon send such balls from London ‡ as would bring the Dauphin's palace about his ears. The incident had no real bearing on the course of the negotiations, but it stirred the popular fancy and feeling. In the vernacular history and ballads of the time these tennis-balls figure as the beginning of evil for the French.

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* *Fœdera*, ix., 91–103.

† Otterbourne, p. 275 ; *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 1vo. Other writers, like Walsingham (*Hist. Angl.*, ii., 302) and Elmham (*Vita*, p. 30), speak of the French scornful flippancy without giving details ; did they think them too undignified ? Elmham, however, duly records the present of tennis-balls in his "*Liber Metricus*" (155–162). The story seems well established ; Otterbourne says that Henry was at Kenilworth ; this fixes the date, for the King was there on 27th February. Cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 117.

‡ In contradistinction to "pilæ Parisianæ" or tennis-balls.

Whilst the Parliament was sitting at Leicester there came to England fresh embassies both from Burgundy and the Armagnacs. Burgundy's envoys had the better reception and treated with the King in person at Leicester, whilst the Dauphin's ambassadors remained at London. On 23rd May, Henry concluded a secret treaty with Burgundy, providing for an alliance against the Armagnacs, but with a saving for the French King. On 4th June, Henry le Scrope and Hugh Mortimer were appointed publicly to negotiate with Burgundy not only for an alliance and commercial intercourse, but actually for a marriage with his daughter, another Catherine; authority was also given to the envoys to receive from the Duke his homage as Henry's vassal.* It was not without reason that the Government at Paris suspected Burgundy of intriguing for an English alliance. The negotiations with the Armagnac envoys had been concluded four days previously, when the Bishops of Durham and Norwich,† the Earl of Salisbury and Richard Grey of Codnor, were appointed as the King's ambassadors to treat for the marriage and for "a way of ministration of justice and the restitution of our rights and heritage."‡ The English envoys crossed over to France on 10th July, and opened negotiations with the Duke of Berri at Paris, whilst the Dauphin was prosecuting his war with Burgundy before Arras. The Duke rejected Henry's

* *Fœdera*, ix., 136–138.

† This was Henry's old friend Richard Courtenay who had been consecrated in September, 1413.

‡ *Fœdera*, ix., 131, 150.

demand for the Crown of France as too ridiculous to be discussed, but intimated that he might assent to some territorial concessions in Aquitaine.* So no advance was made beyond an extension of the promise of marriage, and the bishops returned to England at the beginning of October.

Henry may have used diplomacy as a weapon to prevent any agreement between Burgundy and the Armagnacs, and probably played off one party against the other. He can have expected no practical result from his negotiations, but delay gave time for preparation. The whole question was laid before a Council of nobles which met at Westminster at Michaelmas. The Lords declared their confidence that so Christian a prince would eschew by all possible ways the shedding of Christian blood, and recommended a further embassy. Deferentially they suggested that the King might of his own proper motion offer some mean way, that were a "modering of your hole title." If he was met with a denial of all right and reason, they were ready with their bodies to do him service, and trusted that all the works of readiness would in the meantime be wrought and thought of under advice of the Council.†

In November, the second Parliament of the year was assembled. Henry Beaufort, the Chancellor, took for his text, "While we have time let us do good." There was, he said, a time for peace and a time for war: by the gift of God there was now peace

* *Fœdera*, ix., 186; *Chron. St. Denys*, v., 376.

† Nicolas, *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, ii., 140–142.

at home and a just quarrel, as became a prince who intended war abroad. But for the King's high and honourable purpose there were three things needful: the sage and loyal counsel of his lieges, the strong and true assistance of his people, and a bounteous subsidy from his subjects. All which they would readily grant, seeing that the more the Prince's patrimony is increased, the more the charges of his lieges are diminished. Henry's confidence in his people was justified. The Dauphin's ill-timed jest and the King's high bearing had roused the warlike spirit of the nation. The Commons responded with alacrity and voted two whole fifteenths and two whole tenths, though they recommended that a further embassy should be sent to France.*.

Henry accordingly commissioned the Bishops of Durham and Norwich, the Earl of Dorset and Richard Grey of Codnor to go again to Paris, "hoping in the Lord that a final peace might yet be devised." The recommendations of the Council and Commons and the King's pious aspirations were perhaps equally formal. The ambassadors crossed over in February, 1415. They first demanded the restitution of the Crown of France; but as this seemed not likely to be acceptable they condescended further, protesting that if the King took less than his rights it was only for the honour of God and the love of peace. So after much parleying they at last disclosed what were presumably the genuine demands, namely, (1) the fulfilment of the Treaty of Bretigny; (2) the cession of half the county of Provins, and the lordships of

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv. 34–35; *Proc. Privy Council*, ii., 150.

Beaufort and Nogent;* (3) the payment of King John's ransom, amounting to 1,600,000 crowns;† and (4) the hand of Catherine with a dowry of 2,000,000 crowns. The French in reply offered large concessions in Aquitaine and a dowry, first of 600,000, and eventually of 800,000 crowns. Further than this they would not go; their proposals were so liberal that the payment of the ransom of King John might well be waived, whilst Provins, Beaufort, and Nogent were not in the royal power to give. To such terms the English ambassadors had no authority to agree; so towards the end of March they departed homewards, after arranging that fresh ambassadors should be sent to treat with Henry in England.‡

By this time the French Court can have hoped for no more than a postponement of the war, unless they were prepared for the dismemberment of the kingdom. It was indeed reported in France that Henry could no longer control the impatient ardour of his subjects, and was determined to maintain his pretensions sword in hand.§ It is certainly true that the spirit of the English nation was fully roused, and for months past both King and people had been preparing openly for war. In September, 1414, the exportation of gunpowder from English ports was forbidden, and orders issued to Nicholas Merbury "our Master of Works, Engines, Guns, and other

* These lands were claimed by Henry, as heir of Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche Countess of Champagne.

† This is £266,666.13.4.

‡ *Fœdera*, ix., 208–15.

§ *Chron. St. Denys*, v., 499.

Ordnance of War." * The following spring saw a more extended activity. In March officers were despatched to hire ships in Holland and bring them to London, Sandwich and Winchelsea. Nicholas Mauduyt and Robert Sellowe, the King's sergeants-at-arms, had orders to seize all vessels of twenty tons burthen and upwards from Bristol to the Tyne; the English ships were to be brought to Southampton, and the foreign ones to the same ports as those hired in Holland.† The King's Pavilioner, the royal Bowyer, the Sergeant-Carter, the Sergeant-Farrier, the royal Minstrels, the King's Physician and Surgeon, all in due course received orders to make preparations in their respective departments. The Sheriffs were directed to collect draught-oxen for transport and cattle for the commissariat; the proper officers were commissioned to hire masons, carpenters and smiths for service in the war. The royal jewels were put in pawn, and large loans of money raised from English towns‡ and Italian merchants. Nothing that was necessary for the equipment of a great expedition was overlooked, and even in April, 1415, it was reported in France that no English King had ever got together so strong an army.

Henry's forethought was not confined merely to

* The King's guns were brought from Bristol in September, 1413.—*Fœdera*, ix., 49.

† *Id.*, ix., 215–216.

‡ London lent 10,000 marks; Norwich 500, Lynn 400, Bristol 360, and even a small place like Sudbury 40 marks. A little later, when Henry was at Harfleur, Richard Whittington sent him a loan of 700 marks. (*Fœdera*, ix., 310.)

the equipment of his host. Due precautions were taken for the safeguarding of the country during his absence. From the commencement of his reign he had recognised the wisdom of making terms with the Scots, and had opened proposals for the restoration of the young King James. This had so far come to nothing, though a truce had been established between the two countries. In February, 1415, the Council had made provision for the safeguarding of the coasts and the garrisoning of Wales, the Scottish March, and Calais, during the King's absence. After the failure of the embassy to France was reported, a great Council was summoned to Westminster on 16th April, when Henry declared his firm intention to make a voyage in his own person for the recovery of his inheritance. Next day Bedford was named Lieutenant in his brother's absence, and his Council appointed. It was also decided what payments were to be made to those who went on the voyage, * and many of the great nobles who were present concluded their agreements with the King. Among the first was Thomas of Clarence, who covenanted to serve with 240 men-at-arms and 720 horse-archers. This was an unusual number; even the Earl of Salisbury promised only 40 men-at-arms and 80 horse-archers; and Thomas, the Baron of Carew, 12 men-at-arms and 24 foot-archers. On the 29th May, the commissions of array went out to every county to muster hoblers,† archers, and men-at-arms. All were summoned to be at Southampton by the beginning of July. For a year past

* See below, page 198.

† Light horsemen.

the King had never been far from the capital; but as the time for departure drew nigh his presence was needed elsewhere. On 18th June, he rode through London to make his offering at St. Paul's, and when the Mayor and citizens had bidden him God-speed, started for Winchester.

Meanwhile the negotiations with the French still dragged their course. On 7th April, Henry had sent Dorset Herald to Paris, declaring his continued desire for peace and his surprise at the dallying of the intended embassy. The French King had appointed his representatives a few days later, and the truce had been prolonged to give time for negotiation. But it was only on 17th June that the Archbishop of Bourges and his colleagues crossed over to Dover. They proceeded by easy stages to Winchester, where they arrived on 30th June. Henry received them in the hall of the Bishop's palace, reclining on a dais and clad in a long robe of cloth of gold. On his right hand were standing his three brothers, the Duke of York, and other nobles; on his left, the Bishops of Winchester, Durham, and Norwich. The ambassadors with a humble obeisance presented their letters of credence, which the King kissed and handed to his Chancellor. Wine and spices were then served, and the audience concluded with an invitation to dinner next day.

On 1st July, after mass, the King received the ambassadors in public. The Archbishop of Bourges delivered an address on the text, "Peace be unto thee and to thine house." Henry Beaufort replied that his master had heard the Archbishop's eloquent



HENRY V.

FROM A CONTEMPORARY MINIATURE.

speech with much pleasure, and desired to make good speed with the negotiations. A state banquet followed, and at its close the King spoke very graciously to the French envoys, but no business was done.

On the third day the representatives of the two nations at last got to work. The French offered the same territory as before, with a dower of 800,000 francs, which after much argument they raised to 900,000. The same subject was discussed on 3rd July, the English demanding that the dower should be 900,000 crowns; the French were willing to increase their first offer from francs to crowns, but on this point they could come to no terms. On the fifth day the King was present in person to hear what the French would offer in the way of justice. The Archbishop of Bourges proposed some further territorial concessions in the Limousin, and an increase of the dower to 850,000 crowns. This seemed to please the King, who said that he would consider it. At the next session Henry expressed his readiness to accept the proposed terms, if coupled with a definite truce for fifty years. He offered to send his secretary to France to obtain a decision, if the ambassadors would in the meantime remain in England. Such an unexpected complacency rather disconcerted the envoys, who at once began to raise difficulties as to the fulfilment of the compact. Henry then closed the audience in manifest displeasure. Next day the Chancellor delivered to the ambassadors his master's final reply. The King, he said, had been anxious to find in the marriage an honourable way for peace.

Now after protracted delay the French offered a considerable territory and a dowry of 850,000 crowns, but they could not or would not furnish any assurance as to the completion of the undertaking. It was clear that his cousin of France had no intention to labour sincerely and truly for peace. "Therefore my master relying upon the divine assistance must have recourse to other remedies. God, the angels and mankind, heaven and earth and all that are therein, are his witnesses, that he is driven hereto by the denial of justice that he has met with at the hands of his said cousin."

With this the negotiations were broken off; the ambassadors took their leave of the King, and returned in haste to their own country.* Both sides had now abandoned all idea of peace; and though on 28th July Henry sent his principal herald to Paris, with a message couched in the loftiest terms of self-righteousness but offering to forego 50,000 crowns of the dowry, the mission was no doubt intended as a formal defiance to war, and as such the French accepted it.

After the departure of the ambassadors, Henry paid a brief visit to London. He was back at Southampton on 20th July, when he issued orders for the final muster with a view to the immediate sailing of the host. But at the very moment when all seemed to be in fair progress there came a thunderbolt from an unexpected quarter.

The Earl of March sought an audience with the King, and revealed a plot that was on the point of execution. He had been long worked on by his

* *Chron. St. Denys*, v., 512-526.

confessors to claim what they told him were his rights; and lately he had been approached by his brother-in-law, the Earl of Cambridge, with a proposal that he should flee into Wales and issue a proclamation asserting his title to the Crown. Cambridge in his confession declared that March had himself assented to the plot. The leaders in the conspiracy, besides Cambridge, were Henry le Scrope of Masham and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, a knight of the North Country. The intention was to bring in the pretended Richard from Scotland; or, if this, as was likely, failed, to proclaim the Earl of March King. The scheme also included projects for recalling the heir of Percy from Scotland, and rekindling the rebellion in Wales. It was in effect a revival of the old alliance of Percy, Mortimer and Glendower. Grey no doubt represented the Percy element, and Cambridge the claims of Mortimer. Scrope's complicity was more amazing; he had been Treasurer in 1411, and enjoyed Henry's peculiar favour and friendship; he had even shared the King's bed, and in the most confidential negotiations with France he had been an indispensable agent. An explanation of his treachery has been sought in his marriage to Johanna Holland, the Duchess Dowager of York and step-mother of Cambridge. Popular rumour alleged that the conspirators were bribed with French gold; if there is any truth in this story it is perhaps possible that Scrope was the go-between, and the mercenary author of the whole conspiracy.*

* Walsingham (*Hist. Angl.*, ii., 305–306) seems to support such a view.

It was on 20th July that March revealed the plot to the King. Next day a commission of enquiry was appointed and the three chief conspirators at once arrested. On 2nd August they were brought before a jury of the county at Southampton. Cambridge and Grey confessed their guilt and threw themselves on the King's mercy, but Scrope claimed that he should be tried by his peers. The jury found them all guilty, and Grey as a commoner was beheaded forthwith. The final decision in the cases of Cambridge and Scrope was referred to a court of peers summoned specially under the presidency of the Duke of Clarence. This Court confirmed the finding of the jury, and on 5th August both Scrope and Cambridge were beheaded.

Henry's justice, as on all such occasions, was swift and severe ; but he was not vindictive nor suspicious, and showed the same friendship as before to the young Earl of March and to Cambridge's brother, Edward of York. The danger was sufficiently serious to have justified the most extreme measures, since had the conspirators succeeded in their intentions the King's departure for France would have been followed by a general rising. The Lollards were, it would seem, privy to the conspiracy ; and on a false report that the King had sailed, Oldcastle had emerged from his hiding-place. But, after the news of what had befallen the traitors at Southampton, the movement collapsed ; and Oldcastle disappeared as mysteriously as before.

There were not wanting advisers who urged that, in view of so manifold a tissue of treasons, the King

should defer his expedition till a more favourable time. But though he took such precautions for the future as prudence dictated, Henry was firm in his purpose to go. Any suggestion of panic or timidity would indeed have been impolitic. The season required a bold and fearless ruler; it was Henry's confidence in himself and his destinies that was the secret of his strength.



# CHAPTER IX

## THE FIRST INVASION OF FRANCE
## AUG.–OCT., 1415

ON Wednesday, 7th August, Henry embarked on a small vessel at Porchester Castle, and was taken out to his ship, *The Trinity*, then lying in Southampton Water. As soon as he had gone on board, the sail-yard was hoisted half-mast high as a signal to make ready for sea. It took three days for the vast fleet of 1500 ships to assemble from Southampton and the adjoining harbours. Numerous as the ships were, they did not suffice to carry all the troops who had been brought together. The actual number of fighting men who left England may have been in round numbers 2000 men-at-arms, with upwards of 6000 archers, more than half the latter being mounted. Besides these there were in the King's own retinue 120 miners and 75 gunners. The total can hardly have been so great as 9000 effective troops; but in addition there were a large number of pages and serving-men. Henry's own retinue, exclusive of the miners and gunners, consisted of 750 persons, armourers, yeomen of the pavilions, bowyers, saddlers, smiths, carpenters, and

other labourers, not to mention physicians, surgeons, and chaplains.* Three dukes, eight earls, and nearly twenty barons, besides a great number of knights and other gentlemen took part in the expedition, which thus included almost the whole chivalry of England.†

At last on Sunday, 11th August, all was ready, and favoured by a gentle breeze the great fleet set sail. As the cliffs of the Isle of Wight faded in the distance, a number of swans were observed swimming fearlessly between the ships, a circumstance which the beholders interpreted as a happy omen. On the Tuesday evening about five o'clock, the English navy entered the Seine and dropped anchor off the Chef de Caux, three miles below Harfleur. The "Banner of Council" was flown on *The Trinity*, and the captains of the host at once went on board to receive their orders from the King. Early next morning before daybreak a small party was landed to reconnoitre,

* The Roll compiled by Nicolas (*Battle of Agincourt*, pp. 373–389) gives 2536 men-at-arms, 4128 horse-archers, 3771 foot-archers, and 98 crossbowmen; in all 10,533. But this includes double entries and some who are known not to have gone; on the other hand there are some omissions; see *Gesta*, p. 9, note 1. Henry's chaplain (*Gesta*, pp. 35–36) says 300 lances and 900 archers were left at Harfleur, about 5000 sent home sick, leaving not more than 900 lances and 5000 archers to go to Agincourt; after an allowance for those who died before Harfleur we have a total of well over 12,000. But the two items of 5000 are round numbers and probably excessive. See further, pp. 135, 136.

† Only three Earls were absent, viz.: Westmoreland, who was on the Scottish March; Warwick, who was Captain of Calais; and Devonshire, who was too old. Stafford and Somerset as boys do not count. The whole peerage did not number much over forty.

under the command of the Earl of Huntingdon, Sir Gilbert Umfraville, and other knights. Their report proving favourable, the general disembarkment began between the hours of six and seven o'clock. Henry himself was one of the first to land; hardly had his feet touched the shore, when he fell on his knees with a prayer that he might do nothing in his warfare which would not redound to the honour of God and fulfilment of justice. The royal tents were at once pitched on a hill over against Harfleur, in the midst of enclosures and orchards that afforded a pleasant resting-place till the landing of the host was complete. This business, which occupied four whole days, was accomplished without opposition, though the nature of the ground should have made resistance easy.

The negligence of the French is the more unaccountable since the destination of the expedition, which was long kept secret, had been for some weeks well known. Though the Dauphin's advisers were fully informed of the English plans, they had taken no effective measures beyond summoning the feudal forces for service in the field. The French Government was indeed crippled for want of money, and in its endeavour to find a remedy by fresh imposts created only a new evil. The demands of the royal tax-gatherers were so burdensome that the country-folk fled from before them; the French peasants felt that they could not suffer more from a foreign foe than they were threatened with by the officers of their own sovereign. Whilst the rulers of France were at once so weak and hateful, it is no

wonder that the English on their landing found their enemies but half prepared. At Harfleur itself something had been done. The town lies in a valley where the river Lezarde joins the Seine. It was only a small place, but from its position was the key of Normandy, and both town and harbour were well fortified after the science of the day. The gates had been recently defended by outworks of earth and timber, and the entrance to the harbour secured by chains and sharp-pointed stakes. Deep dykes had been dug and huge earthworks thrown up on the western side of the town, towards the spot where it was known that Henry would attempt to land. On the north, the Lezarde had been dammed by breaking down the bridges, so that the whole valley lay under water. With all these precautions, even a small force should have made it difficult if not impossible for an enemy to land ; but as things were, the very garrison of Harfleur itself was incomplete, and the English were allowed to establish themselves unopposed.

On Saturday, 17th August, Henry moved his forces up towards the town, and began his preparations for a formal siege. But the damming of the Lezarde, which cut off the English from the eastern side, prevented an effectual investment. So on the Sunday the Sire de Gaucourt was able to make his way into Harfleur with a welcome reinforcement of three hundred men-at-arms. That same evening Henry sent off the Duke of Clarence in haste to march some nine or ten miles round up the valley of the Lezarde. On his way, Clarence fell in with a

strong convoy which was bringing guns, gunpowder, arrows, and crossbows in great abundance for the defence of Harfleur. The French in the town sallied out to the rescue, but after a sharp skirmish near Montivilliers were driven back. So the convoy with all its stores was captured, and the valley of the Lezarde successfully crossed. As soon as Clarence had established himself on the eastern ridge above Harfleur, the investment was made complete. The fleet cut off all communication by sea; whilst boats were launched on the Lezarde to guard that side, and to keep the two divisions of the besieging force in touch.

After a formal summons to surrender, the English guns and engines were put in position. Day and night the bombardment continued, and the ballad-makers tell gleefully how King Henry played tennis at Harfleur with his hard gun-stones. "Fifteen before," said London.* "Thirty is mine," said Messenger. The King's Daughter said, "There they play, five and forty that is no nay." The artillery was worked so vigorously that within a few days not only a great part of the walls and towers, but many of the buildings in the heart of the town were reduced to ruins. Guns of such power were still uncommon, and the novelty of the bombardment added greatly to its terrors. The Chronicler of St. Denys relates that the English guns were of a monstrous greatness, belching forth whole millstones with foul smoke and horrible din as though from

*Every great gun had its name, like the stone-casters of an earlier age, and the "Long Toms" and "Long Cecils" of our own.



MICHAEL, EARL OF SUFFOLK.

the very jaws of hell. But the garrison on their side fought manfully; and as fast as any part of their walls was shattered, made it good at night with a barricade of faggots and earthworks. So also, when by Henry's direction mines were dug on the eastern side of the town, the French made a countermine and thrice defeated the besiegers; for from the nature of the ground these works had to be made in the open, contrary to the advice of "Master Giles" in his book on the military art.* The English, it seems, were from long disuse not well practised in siege operations; but after many fierce encounters they pushed their lines close up to the town. Throughout the siege Henry was indefatigable; every night he would make the rounds in person, praising what was done well, noting what was amiss, and devising better methods for future use.

The toils of war and the evils natural to the concentration of a large army in a narrow space were aggravated by the unusual heat of the autumn, which was so excessive that the knights could scarcely endure to wear their armour. It was thus no wonder that sickness raged in the English camp, and caused many deaths from dysentery and fever. Amongst others, there died Henry's old friend Richard Courtenay, Bishop of Norwich, and Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. A French chronicler says that the English suffered from lack of wholesome food, since the supplies they had brought with

*Ægidius Romanus (Guido di Colonna), *De Re Militari*. This work, which was translated into English by Hoccleve, is often quoted by the author of the *Gesta Henrici*.

them had been spoilt by the sea. An English writer, on the other hand, denies that there was any great scarcity, though he speaks of much imprudence in diet.*

The French in Harfleur also suffered much from sickness, so that by mid-September the greater part of the garrison were too ill to fight. Still in spite of all their hardships and short rations, they proudly refused a second summons to surrender on 17th September. When, however, Henry ordered the bombardment to be renewed in preparation for an assault on the morrow, the French in despair offered to yield up the town on the following Sunday, if no rescue came in the meantime.† The chief citizens delivered themselves as hostages, whilst de Gaucourt went to Rouen, where the Dauphin now lay with his army. But the French captains declared they were not ready, and gave de Gaucourt only fine words; so he came again to Harfleur and sent message to Henry that he would surrender at the appointed time.

On the Sunday (22nd Sept.) Henry had his pavilions pitched on the hill before the town. Then he took his seat in "state as royal as did ever any king, and there was never Christian king so royal nor so lordly sat in his seat as did he."‡ His nobles stood about him in gay apparel; on his right hand was Gilbert Umfraville, bearing the coroneted helm on a halberd-staff. Certain knights and lords were

* St. Rémy, i., 226; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 44.

† Delpit, p. 217; Letter from Henry to the Mayor of London.

‡ *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Cleop. C. iv., f. 24.

appointed to receive the French captains, whom they brought through one tent after another till they reached the royal presence. There the Frenchmen knelt before the King, and delivered up the keys of Harfleur to the Earl Marshal. Henry told them that though their submission was tardy, yet they should not fail of his grace; and gave orders that they should be honourably entertained and treated.

The banner of St. George and the royal standard were at once hoisted above the gates of the town, and the Earl of Dorset was named Captain of Harfleur. Henry himself did not make his entry till the Monday. When he reached the gate, he dismounted from his horse, and walking barefoot through the streets to the Church of St. Martin, there returned thanks for his victory. As soon as this duty had been performed, steps were taken for the good ordering of the town. The chief citizens were held to ransom, and sent prisoners to England. The Sire de Gaucourt and other nobles were dismissed on their parole to surrender at Calais on 11th November next. The poorer citizens, who would not swear fealty, were compelled to leave the town, but permitted to take so much of their goods as they could carry with them.

Henry's treatment of Harfleur formed an essential part of his policy. One of his first acts after the surrender of the town was to cause proclamation to be made throughout England, that whoever would come and abide in Harfleur should have house and household to him and his heirs for evermore.* The

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 3ro.

intention was not to create merely a second Calais; we must accept the scheme as evidence that Henry contemplated a permanent and extended conquest. Harfleur was the key of Normandy, and as such it was necessary that its possession should be made secure as the base and starting-point for future enterprise.

Henry no doubt had some such purpose in view when he departed from the traditions of his great-grandfather's wars, and began his campaign with a set siege. A plundering raid, such as the expeditions of Sir Robert Knolles, in 1370, and of Thomas of Woodstock, in 1380, might inflict great damage on the enemy, but would have been worse than useless as the commencement of conquest. Still the capture of a single seaport lacked dramatic effect as the sole fruit of a great expedition. In spite, therefore, of the lateness of the season, and of the advice of his Council, Henry resolved to march with the greater part of his host by land to Calais. He was anxious, he said, to view the territories that were his inheritance; victory did not always rest with the big battalions, and if he were now to retire oversea men might charge him justly with cowardice. "We will go, if it please God, without harm or danger; but if they disturb our journey we will win victory and fame everlasting." * Henry was probably encouraged in his resolve by the inaction of the French generals. He may even have counted on help from Burgundy, who had sullenly held aloof from the Parisian Government. The plan was bold

* *Gesta*, p. 36; Livius, p. 12.

to the verge of rashness, but it was well calculated to impress the popular imagination both in France and England.

Before he left Harfleur, Henry in his fine fashion sent a message to the Dauphin, challenging him to decide their quarrel in single combat. For this purpose he would await the prince at Harfleur during eight days.* The challenge was probably no more than one of the courtesies of mediæval warfare, and gave a convenient excuse for needful delay. Disease had played such havoc in the English host that many were unfit for further service and must perforce go home by sea. To the command of this portion and of the fleet, the Duke of Clarence, who had himself suffered from sickness, was appointed. The Earl of Dorset, as Captain of Harfleur, was given three hundred men-at-arms and nine hundred archers as a garrison for the town.† The remainder, who, according to the best English account, did not number above nine hundred lances and five thousand archers, were to accompany the King on his march. ‡

* *Fœdera*, ix., 313 ; dated 16th September. But there is some reason to suppose that the real date was later.

† *Gesta*, p. 35 ; this is confirmed by an order for the payment of the garrison on 25th November, 1415 (*Proc. Privy Council*, ii., 184–185). Monstrelet (p. 371) says 500 men-at-arms and 1500 archers ; but the French figures are generally excessive.

‡ *Gesta*, p. 36 ; the writer probably had access to official information. His estimate of the men-at-arms seems approximately accurate, that of the archers is perhaps excessive. The Roll of Agincourt, compiled in 1416 by Sir Robert Babthorp, gives 812 men-at-arms and 3074 archers. (Nicolas, *Battle of Agincourt*, p. 363 ; I make the details given on the previous pages sum up to 876 men-at-arms and only 2717 archers.) Babthorp's return of archers was perhaps

The distance from Harfleur to Calais was reckoned at a hundred miles,* and was expected to be covered in eight marches. The army was to move rapidly, and the artillery and heavy baggage were therefore left behind at Harfleur, or sent by sea to England. Such a journey through a hostile country required some forethought, and strict orders were issued for the governance of the army. All burning and pillage were forbidden on pain of death ; though, if they met with resistance, the soldiers might help themselves to such food and other supplies as were necessary. The army was to march in three divisions. Sir John Cornwall and Sir Gilbert Umfraville led the van. Henry himself, with his brother Humphrey and the Earl of Huntingdon, commanded in the centre. The rear-guard was entrusted to the Duke of York and the Earl of Oxford.

On Tuesday, 8th October, Henry marched out from Harfleur past Montivilliers to the neighbourhood of Fécamp. Before both towns his troops had skirmishes with the French garrisons. There was, however, no serious opposition till about midday on the Friday, when, as the English army approached Arques, near Dieppe, the French in the castle fired

imperfect ; but, having regard to the width of the battle-field, 600 to 700 would seem a fair allowance for each of the six "herses" at Agincourt ; say a total at most of 4000. St. Rémy (i., 245), who was with the English army, says the numbers were about 900 to 1000 men-at-arms and 10,000 archers ; the latter figure is clearly a guess. The French estimates are again too high ; Des Ursins (p. 518), gives 22,000. No English estimate much exceeds that of the *Gesta ;* Hardyng, the highest, gives 9000 fighting men.

* It is more nearly 150.

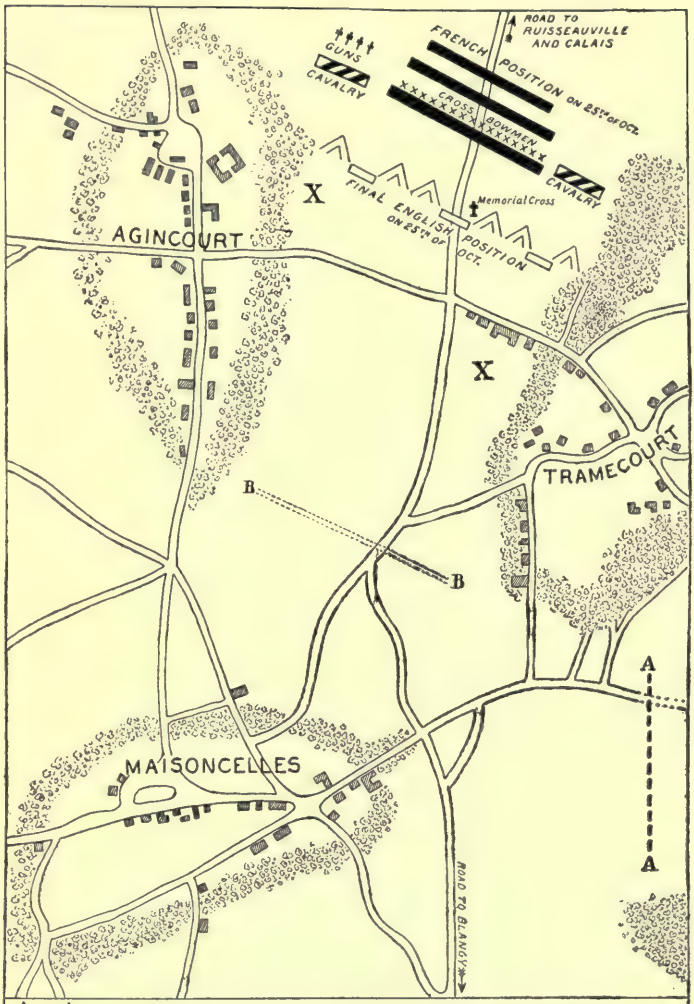
a volley from their cannon; but after some parleying the governor granted a free passage and a small quantity of bread and wine. Next day there was a sharp fight outside Eu, but on the following morning the inhabitants purchased protection for the neighbouring villages by a supply of food. On the Sunday Henry hoped by a long march to cross the Somme at the ford of Blanche-Taque, as his great-grandfather had done nearly seventy years before on the way to Crecy. But when within five miles of the river the vanguard took prisoner a Gascon gentleman, who reported that the ford was held by a strong body of six thousand troops. The French chronicler* is at a loss how to condemn the Gascon enough; for, as he alleges, there were no troops at the ford; so that had not this story been invented, Henry might have marched in peace to Calais, and France would have been spared the unhappy day of Agincourt.

There were various opinions in the English army as to whether the French would offer battle. Some thought that the discords and jealousies of the French princes would prevent them from taking the field; but the better opinion seemed to be that French chivalry would never suffer the disgrace of letting an English army march unopposed through their country. There had indeed been long discussions among the French princes and commanders assembled at Rouen. Charles d'Albret the Constable and the Marshal Boucicault advocated a Fabian policy; the French had nothing to gain from

* St. Rémy, i., 232–233.

fighting, and a purely defensive attitude was the best for them to adopt. But such a course did not commend itself to the fiery Armagnac nobles, under whose advice the King and the Dauphin gave orders for their forces to take the field.* A portion of the French army was already concentrated under d'Albret and Boucicault behind the Somme. On 13th October they were at Abbeville, but on the approach of the English fell back by way of Corbie and Peronne to Bapaume. These movements had been carried out before d'Albret was overruled by the Council at Rouen. After the Council had made its decision, the French princes hastened to join the army at Bapaume; thither came all the chief Armagnac nobles, the King of Sicily, the Dukes of Orleans, Bourbon, and Bar. The Duke of Alençon and Arthur de Richemont, brother of the Duke of Brittany, had been with the Marshal and Constable at Abbeville. The Dauphin himself was anxious to take his part in the war, but the princes, remembering Poitiers, forbade it: "Better lose the battle than lose both battle and King." But for all their warlike spirit the French princes could not lay aside their personal enmities. The Armagnacs were jealous of Burgundy and wished that he should have no share in the glory. Burgundy in return did what he could to prevent his party from rendering the King any assistance; nevertheless his brother, the Count of Nevers, and many gentlemen of Artois and Picardy, joined the royal host; even his son Philip, Count of Charo-

* Monstrelet, pp. 371–372; he gives the date of the Council at Rouen as 20th October, but clearly it should be some days earlier.




PLAN OF AGINCOURT.

25TH OCTOBER, 1415.

lois, desired with all his heart to fight the English, and many years afterwards regretted that he had not the good fortune to have been at Agincourt, whether for life or death.*

After his disappointment at Blanche-Taque, Henry of necessity marched southwards along the left bank of the Somme. The same evening he reached Abbeville, but only to learn from his scouts that the bridges were all broken down and the French in force on the other side. "So we turned our steps along the river, thinking we had no choice but to march to its source full sixty miles into the heart of France; and thus, when our eight days' store of food was spent, and the countryside laid waste before us, our little band grown weak and weary with long marches and short rations would be overwhelmed by the great host of the enemy."† On the 14th October, the English marched past Pont St. Rémy to Hangest, and on the Tuesday by another long march reached Boves, leaving Amiens a league on their left. Everywhere the bridges and causeways were broken down, and the right bank guarded by the French. The tactics of d'Albret and Boucicault were being justified, and the hearts of many in the English host were sorrowful with thoughts of coming disaster.

The English had now made eight long marches, and on Wednesday, the 16th, they rested at Boves. There they obtained a welcome supply of bread; there was also abundance of wine, to which the soldiers helped themselves too liberally. Henry was very wroth; and when some pleaded excuses, replied

*St. Rémy, i., 239–240. † *Gesta*, pp. 39–40.

that he would not have minded their filling their bottles had not most of them made bottles of their bellies. On Thursday the army marched as far as Corbie; the enemy held the town on the far side of the river in force, and there was a very smart skirmish, in the course of which the French captured the standard of Guienne. Whereupon John Bromley, a groom of the King's chamber, "ran eagerly upon the French, and with his soldiers did so fiercely set upon them that they were beaten back." Bromley himself "cutting through the thickest, strake down the champion that bore the standard and so gloriously recovered it again." * It was whilst the English lay before Corbie that a plunderer was by Henry's orders hanged for stealing the pyx from a church, a piece of sacrilege which Shakespeare has put to the credit of his drunken Bardolph.

From some prisoners who were taken at Corbie, Henry learned that the French commanders purposed to give him battle and ride down the English archers by the weight of their cavalry. So he ordered the archers to provide themselves with stakes, six feet in length and sharp at both ends, which when pitched in the ground before them would form an effective palisade. On Friday, 18th October, a long march brought the English to the neighbourhood of Nesle. There they learned that two practicable fords had been found near Béthencourt. But the approaches passed for nearly a mile through marshy ground over narrow causeways which the French had broken down. Though the

* Holinshed, iii., 75.

horsemen could scarcely pick their way in single file, Cornwall and Umfraville hastily crossed over; and with a small company of men-at-arms and archers seized a position from which they could cover the passage. The French, who were supposed to be on guard, were taken by surprise, and finding themselves outnumbered, beat a retreat. Meantime, Henry had the causeways repaired with brushwood and timber taken from the neighbouring houses, and by nightfall on the 19th October the whole army had safely crossed the Somme.

This success roused the spirits of the English, who now hoped they might march north to Calais unopposed. Before halting for the night, Henry went on through the darkness some five miles to Athies and Mouchy La Gache. On the following morning there arrived three heralds from the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, who announced that the French princes would offer battle on the road to Calais. "Let it be as the Lord wills," replied Henry. And when they asked him by what road he would go, he answered: "Our path lies straight to Calais; and if our adversaries think to bar us of our way, let them see to it at their peril. We shall not seek them out, nor shall we for fear of them either hasten or delay."

On the Monday Henry resumed his march in full order for battle, the Duke of York at his own request taking command of the van. As they marched past Peronne, the state of the roads gave the English warning of the mighty host that had gone before them, but they reached Encre, or Albert,

unmolested. Two long marches on the Tuesday and Wednesday brought the King by way of Forceville to Bonnières, the Duke of York resting on the second night at Frévent, about a league ahead. During these two days the English had been exposed to a flank attack from the enemy at Bapaume. But the French feared to take the offensive, and pushed on by a parallel route to find some strong position where they might have the advantage. On the Thursday, as the English army was descending across the valley of the Ternoise near Blangy, the enemy at last appeared in force on the right. In serried lines battalion after battalion of French troops came down and halted in a broad space about half a mile distant. Henry, expecting an immediate engagement, promptly wheeled round his column into line. As he rode before his troops to mark the foe, his chaplain heard Sir Walter Hungerford say to the King that he would they had with them 10,000 stout archers from England.* "You speak as a fool": answered the King. "By the God of heaven, I would not, if I could, have a man more than I have. For this people which I have is God's people, whom He hath thought it meet for me to have at this present. Wot you not that the Almighty with these humble few can overcome yonder proud Frenchmen, who so boast themselves of their numbers and strength?"

However, after a little the French army moved off, and passing behind some thick woods, presently

* Shakespeare puts this speech in the mouth of the Earl of Westmoreland, who was, of course, on the Scottish border.

took up a position right across the road to Calais near the village of Agincourt. Henry followed the French movements till it was certain there would be no fighting that day, and when it was dark turned aside to Maisoncelles.



# CHAPTER X

## AGINCOURT

### OCT. 25, 1415

IN the darkness of the short autumn day the English stumbled almost unawares into Maisoncelles. Though the village was small, its houses and enclosures afforded them better lodging than they had enjoyed for some time previously. Discipline in Henry's camp was strict; and no sound was heard save the low whispers of the men as they went about their business, or of the priests as they passed up and down hearing confessions. All were employed soberly in preparation for battle; the men-at-arms testing their mail, the archers looking to their bows and fitting new strings for use on the morrow. Perfect order reigned; and so marked was the silence that the French thought Henry must have slipped away under cover of night. The two armies lay so close together that the English could plainly see the great fires burning, and hear the revelry and disorderly shouting in their enemies' camp.

In the French army there was no one who exer-

cised supreme authority; and the vast host that had been so hastily assembled was without proper organisation or equipment. Each company bivouacked, just where they chanced to be, in the cold open fields; whilst the captains sent their pages and varlets to scour the country in search of forage and food. Everywhere there was turmoil and the constant din of men and horses tramping to and fro. The nobles gathered round the watch-fires, and whiled away the night carousing and gambling at dice for the prisoners they made sure to take on the morrow. Even amongst the commanders there was the same boastful confidence and the same lack of order. When they met in council, there was no one who could assert authority, and much of their time was occupied with absurd wrangling for precedence. D'Albret and Boucicault, with others of proved experience, would even now have held their hand; the French had only to remain on the defensive, and within a few days the English would be starved into surrender. But the fiery young princes would listen to no arguments. They were persuaded that the very sight of such a host would fill the enemy with panic, and that one resolute charge would decide the day. The only question which they would discuss seriously was, who should have the honour of fighting in the front line; over this they quarrelled without thought of expediency.

The night before the battle was cold and stormy, and for hours the rain poured down in torrents; but toward morning the moon came out and enabled the English to reconnoitre the field of battle. At day-

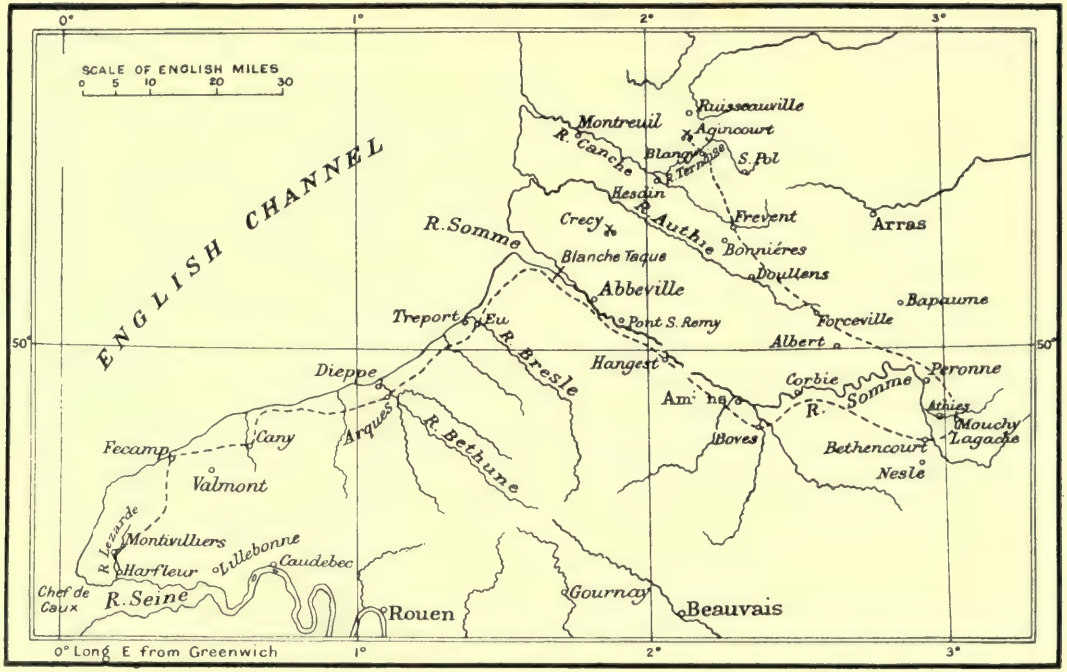
break Henry was astir, and except for his helmet was already clad in full armour with his surcoat of the lions and lilies. After hearing mass, he put on his helmet with its richly jewelled coronet*; and mounting a small grey horse, saw to the ordering of his host in person. The little army was drawn up in line four deep. The vanguard, under York, took the right, the King himself held the centre, and Lord Camoys was on the left. Each division had its battalion of men-at-arms, with archers on either wing in the wedge-shaped formation known as *en herse.*† Thus there would be six wedges of archers in all, though some authorities seem to imply that the whole of the archers were placed in two masses on the extreme right and left of the line. The wedges were formed with the apex in front; and the archers, being somewhat in advance of the men-at-arms, could use their weapon to the best effect. All the men-at-arms and even the nobles, not excepting the King himself, were to fight on foot. Few of the archers had any armour; most wore their doublets with their long hose tucked up and their feet bare so that they might stand more firmly on the soft ground. Some of them wore leather hoods, and others wicker basnets with a crosspiece of iron; all had some weapon in their belt, whether sword or axe or mace. The baggage

* Amongst Henry's jewels we find "The Crown of Gold for the Basnet," garnished with rubies, sapphires and pearls, and valued at £679.5.0.—*Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 215.

† The "herse" of archers was perhaps so called from the resemblance of the formation to the triangular French harrow; see further below, pp. 199, 200.

# THE CAMPAIGN OF AGINCOURT.

*English route 8-25 October* --------



with the horses was parked in the rear of the army, and a small guard told off for its protection.*

When the marshalling of the host was completed, Henry turned to those about him and asked what hour it was. They told him: "Prime." "Now is good time," he said, "for all England prayeth for us; let us therefore be of good cheer and go to our journey." †

"And whilst all this was being done, and so long as the battle lasted," says Henry's chaplain, "I who write these words sat upon my horse amid the baggage in the rear, and with the other priests humbled my soul before God, saying in my heart: Be mindful of us, O Lord! For our enemies are gathered together and boast themselves in their strength. Break down their power, and scatter them, that they may know there is none other that fighteth for us but only Thou, O God." ‡

The French, who at the lowest estimate were three times as numerous as the English and possibly numbered not less than 50,000 men,§ were drawn up on some rising ground about a mile away. Their position was in itself a fairly strong one, and gave

* Some accounts (as Des Ursins, p. 520) allege that Henry placed archers in ambuscade in the woods. But St. Rémy (i., 251) states expressly that he had satisfied himself there was no truth in the story. Probably the idea was due to the archers on the extreme flanks wheeling round through the woods to come into action.

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 3 vo.

‡ *Gesta*, p. 51.

§ These estimates are given by St. Rémy; the lower is the more likely. The ordinary English accounts give 100,000 to 150,000; the *Gesta* more moderately 60,000. Perhaps 20,000 would be a fair figure.

them more room than they could have had lower down, where the woods of Agincourt and Tramecourt come close together. But on the other hand, unless they remained on the defensive, the narrow space in front put them at a disadvantage. The choice of position, like many other things, shows how the French suffered from divided or ill-considered counsels. Even as it was the place was too narrow for them, and they were compelled to form up in three dense masses one behind the other. The front division was commanded by d'Albret and Boucicault with the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the Count of Eu and Arthur de Richemont. The second division was under the Dukes of Bar and Alençon and the Counts of Nevers and Vaudemont; the third under the Counts of Marle, Dammartin, and Fauquemberg. In the first division, and perhaps in the second also, the men-at-arms were dismounted and fought on foot. The first division included a good number of crossbowmen, who should on all sound principles have held the foremost place; but the men-at-arms would not give way to them, saying that they did not need their help, so that they were stationed a little in the rear, where they could be of no use whatever. The men-at-arms themselves were crowded so close together that they could not handle their pikes without shortening them; and their long coats of mail, plate-armour, and greaves were so heavy that they could not march without difficulty. On either wing there was posted a force of cavalry, intended to attack the English in flank. On one wing also there were some small field guns,

but these, like the archers, were placed so badly that they were of little service.

After the English army was marshalled, Henry rode down the lines and addressed his men. He had come into France to recover his right heritage, for the which to do he had good and just cause and quarrel. Let them remember that they were born of the kingdom of England, where they had left their fathers and mothers, their wives and little ones. It was theirs that day to guard his person and the honour of the crown of England. For himself, as he was a true king and knight, England should never pay ransom for him, since he would rather be dead that day on the field than taken of his enemies. So with a meek heart and a good spirit he besought God of His help and succour; and bade them all be of good cheer, for they should have a fair day and a gracious victory.* And when the Englishmen heard his words they answered with a shout: "Sire! we pray God grant you a good life and victory over our enemies."

Then Henry led his men forward till they were a little more than half a mile from the enemy, the baggage train following close behind. There he halted in a favourable position, whilst his soldiers refreshed themselves. Marking how strong the French were, he still hesitated to attack. So he sent messengers to propose terms for a free passage to Calais. If this was granted, he would be ready to surrender Harfleur and all his prisoners. The French

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 3vo; St. Rémy, i., 245–246, 251.

princes demanded that he should further renounce all title to the crown of France and content himself with those territories which the English held already in Guienne and Picardy.* So far as this Henry would not go, and he determined at all hazards to force on an engagement. Delay would favour the French and was discouraging to the high-strung spirits of his own men.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Henry with a loud voice gave the command: "In the name of Almighty God and of Saint George, Avaunt Banner in the best time of the year, and Saint George this day be thine help." Old Sir Thomas Erpingham, Steward of the King's Household, threw his warder into the air as the signal to advance. Every man stooped to kiss the earth in token of his reconciliation to God. With a ringing cheer they rose, and the whole army marched steadily forward in good order. When they came within bowshot of the enemy, where the woods on either side gave them most protection, Henry bade his men halt. The archers planted their stakes in front, the clarions sounded, and the English cheered again so lustily, "Hurrah! hurrah! Saint George and Merry England!" that the Frenchmen marvelled.†

When the French cavalry on the wings saw the English archers were making ready, they came pricking down to override them. But the space was so narrow that they could not charge with any effect. Only a few reached the English lines, where they stumbled

* St. Rémy, i., 251-252; *Chron. St. Denys*, v., 554.

† St. Rémy, i., 253; Des Ursins, p. 520.

among the stakes and were slain. The greater part of them turned before the deadly hail of arrows, and falling back in confusion, spread disorder among their friends. Meantime the French main line, whether galled by the English volleys or from lack of discipline, had, contrary to the intention of d'Albret, begun to advance. They had to cross a newly ploughed field, which was sodden with the rain and churned into a quagmire by the constant trampling of the previous night. The heavy men-at-arms sank ankle-deep in the soft earth, and could scarcely drag one foot after another, as they toiled painfully down the hill. When they approached the English line, they broke into three columns, so as to charge Henry's little battalions with greater force. The power of men in armour thirty deep should have been irresistible, but at Agincourt the formation exposed each column to a pitiless storm of arrows on either flank. The English archers poured in volley after volley, and never an arrow went amiss; for they shot that day as though for a wager. Still the French pressed on, and by the mere weight of their impact forced our men-at-arms back as it were a spear-length. But the columns were now packed so tight that even in the front rank the men could scarcely wield their weapons. The very numbers of the French turned to their own destruction. For those in front fell fast beneath the English arrows, whilst those behind, pushing helplessly onwards, stumbled over them until living and wounded and dead were piled up in great heaps as high as a man could reach. Then our archers slung their

bows behind them, drew their swords and axes, or the still more deadly mace, and leapt out from behind their palisade. With Henry at their head, the whole English army fell so fiercely on the French, and laid about them right and left so stoutly that they pierced right through to the second battle. It was in vain that the French nobles endeavoured to rally their men. The Duke of Brabant, Burgundy's brother, who had just reached the field, with his head thrust through a pennon for want of a coat-of-arms, charged the English with reckless valour. The Duke of Alençon with a few followers by a furious onslaught broke the English centre and struck down Humphrey of Gloucester with his own hand. Henry, thoughtless of himself, rushed forward to protect his brother, and received such a blow on his helmet as brought him to his knees. But the English rallied round their King, and Alençon was slain before Henry could interfere to save him.*

When the French rear-guard saw how badly the two front divisions were faring, the greater part of them took to flight without striking a blow. The English were too busy for any thought of pursuit, and could scarcely deal with the disorderly crowd which they had already vanquished. Many Frenchmen yielded themselves prisoners that day ten times over; but none had leisure to take them, so great was the stress.† Whilst Henry and his men were thus occupied with the few who still resisted,

* Monstrelet, p. 379; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 67.

† *Gesta*, p. 55.



MEN-AT-ARMS FIGHTING.

FROM A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.

and the many who sought safety in surrender, there came news that the French camp-followers were plundering the English baggage, and that a portion of the rearguard was preparing to renew the battle. The first thing was a small matter, though the royal jewel-chest * was pillaged and the King's seal carried off. But the other danger was serious; and Henry, fearing that his men might be overcome whilst intent on plunder, ordered all prisoners to be slain. The butchery had actually commenced, when the French, being warned by a herald of the consequences of their action, withdrew without further fighting.

Thus after a battle which, for all its fierceness, had not lasted more than two or three hours, the English won a victory of amazing completeness. They had utterly routed an army many times more numerous than their own, had slain of the enemy, † at the lowest estimates, not less than four thousand, and taken prisoner sixteen hundred besides. Prodigious as these numbers seem, they are still more inconceivable when contrasted with the trifling losses of the English. The only men of note who fell on our side were the Duke of York, the young Earl of Suffolk, Sir Richard Kyghley, and David Gam, the King's Welsh squire, who was slain when defending his master. Of the others there fell about a hundred, of whom not more than nine or

* The value of the jewels and plate that were stolen was over £86.—*Fœdera*, ix., 357.

† There were 3 Dukes, 5 Counts, 90 Barons or bannerets, and 1500 knights.—*Gesta*, 57–58. Several authorities put the total French loss at over 10,000; about double the whole number of Englishmen!

ten were men-at-arms.* Amongst the slain on the French side were d'Albret the Constable, Dampierre the Admiral, the Dukes of Brabant, Alençon, and Bar, and the Counts of Nevers, Marle, Vaudemont, Blamont, Grandpré, Roussy, and Fauquemberg. The chief prisoners were the Duke of Orleans (who was dragged out from a heap of slain), the Duke of Bourbon, the Marshal Boucicault, the Counts of Eu and Vendôme, and Arthur de Richemont.

When the battle was over, Henry called to him the French herald Mountjoye, and asked him the name of the castle, which overlooked the field. Learning that it was Agincourt, he said: "Forasmuch as all battles should bear the name of the nearest fortress, this battle shall now and forever be called: 'THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.'"† And since this victory was vouchsafed him on the feast of Saints Crispin and Crispinian, he ordered that they should be commemorated daily at one of the masses in his chapel. ‡

> "This story shall the good man teach his son;
> And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
> From this day to the ending of the world,
> But we in it shall be remembered."

Towards evening the rain came on again, and Henry went back to lodge at Maisoncelles, where his French captives waited on him at supper. The

* *Gesta*, p. 58; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 69. St. Rémy, i., 258, says the total English loss was 1600, but this is a palpable exaggeration; see p. 260, where he says the English loss was not great.

† St. Rémy, i., 259.

‡ Elmham, *Vita*, p. 68.

archers, who had been busy spoiling the dead, brought back such a quantity of armour to the camp that the King forbade any man to take more than he could use; for they were not yet quit of their danger. Out of the rest of the spoil there was made a funeral pyre for the English who had fallen in the battle. Only the bodies of York and Suffolk were preserved and taken home for burial. On the day after the battle the English renewed their march, and three days later, on 29th October, reached Calais. The English army was in great straits for food, and many had to sell their booty and prisoners. When Henry heard of their necessity he ordered ships to be collected, and sent all the men-at-arms and archers with their captives to England. The chief prisoners he kept with him at Calais, where he desired to await de Gaucourt and his companions who had been released on parole at Harfleur.

Immediately after the battle, Henry had sent a messenger to England. The news came to London early on the morning of 29th October, whilst men were yet in their beds. All the churches in the city set their bells a-ringing, and the priests and lettered men sang a "Te Deum" for the victory. At nine o'clock, it was Lord Mayor's Day, the Mayor and his Aldermen with the craftsmen went in procession from St. Paul's to Westminster. And when the Mayor had taken his charge, every man came riding home from Westminster on horseback; and they were joyful and glad for the good tidings they had of their King. *

* *Chron. London*, pp. 101–102.

On Saturday, 16th November, after de Gaucourt and his companions had surrendered, Henry set sail from Calais. The crossing was so rough and stormy that the French nobles found it not at all to their liking, and they wondered greatly at the cheerful and untroubled bearing of the English King. The fleet reached Dover the same evening. When the King's ship touched the strand, the townsmen in their joyous excitement dashed through the waves and bore Henry on their shoulders to the shore.* After resting for Sunday at Dover, Henry rode on to Canterbury, where he made his offering at the shrine of St. Thomas. On the Friday he came to Eltham, and next day entered London in triumph.

On Saturday morning at ten o'clock the Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes, and the lesser citizens in red cloaks and red and white hoods, "went forth to fetch their conquering Cæsar in." After they had made their congratulations, they turned about and rode before Henry in procession from Blackheath to London. For days past the citizens had been busy decorating the streets and preparing pageants in honour of their victorious sovereign. On the Surrey side of London Bridge, where the City was entered, was an arch bearing the figures of two giants † as warders of the city, and the inscription "CIVITAS REGIS JUSTICIÆ." At the other end of the bridge, on either side of the roadway, stood

* Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 70-71.

† One was a figure of a man with the keys, the other a female. No doubt they are the mediæval ancestors of the modern Gog and Magog.

two columns decorated with white and green, and crowned with the lion and antelope, the supporters of the royal arms. Across the road was another arch with a figure of St. George triumphant, under a pavilion, and displaying on a scroll the inscription: SOLI DEO HONOR ET GLORIA. All around were grouped boys in white and gold, who represented the hierarchy of angels and sang in English to welcome their King.* At the conduit in Cornhill was another tower, and a canopy of red cloth adorned with the banners of St. George, St. Edward, St. Edmund and England, and the inscription: "Because the King putteth his trust in the Lord and in the mercy of the Most Highest he shall not miscarry." Under the canopy stood a company of prophets in purple and gold. As Henry approached, the prophets let loose many little birds which fluttered round the King and perched on his shoulders. Then bowing before him, they thundered out the psalm: "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvellous things. With His own right hand, and with His holy arm hath He gotten Himself the victory."

At the entry into Cheapside was a tower and

* One of the songs supposed to have been composed for this occasion is preserved, beginning:

"Deo gratias Anglia redde pro Victoria!
Owre kynge went forth to Normandy,
With grace and myght of chivalry;
The God for hym wrought marvelously,
Wherefore Englonde may calle and cry—
Deo gratias, etc.

For the full words and music see Nicolas, *Agincourt*, Appendix, pp. 67, 68.

pageant of green decked with the arms of the city. Underneath there stood twelve old men to represent the Apostles, and twelve to represent the Kings, Martyrs, and Confessors of England, who scattered silver comfits before the King, whilst the pipes of the conduit ran with wine; and this was in remembrance of how Melchisedec met Abraham on his return from victory. Farther on Chepe Cross was completely hidden under a splendid castle, and the roadway on either side was spanned by arches all decked in red and white and green. From the castle there came out a company of maidens, who with their timbrels danced before the new David, singing in English: "Welcome, Henry the Fifte, Kynge of Englond and of Fraunce." On stages all up both castle and arches were bands of boys with white apparel and shining wings to represent the heavenly host; as Henry passed below they scattered wreaths of laurel and besants of gold, and sang with sweet accord the angels' hymn, "Te Deum." From Cheapside the procession passed on to St. Paul's beneath a glorious canopy of blue, where virgins standing on either hand sent a shower of golden tinsel over the King, and greeted him with cries of "Noel! Noel!" And on this last tower as the conclusion of praise, were the words, "DEO GRATIAS." *

All along the way by which the procession passed were crowds of people in the streets, and the windows and balconies were thronged with citizens

* *Gesta*, pp. 60–67; Lydgate's poem, ap. Nicolas, *Battle of Agincourt*, pp. 327–329; *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 4$^{vo}$.

and lords and ladies in gay attire. Many houses were wreathed with laurel, or with titles of praise. Others were hung with rich tapestry depicting the stories of conquerors of old, and of former Kings of England. Never had there been seen so great a gathering or so splendid a spectacle in London. Yet amidst all this magnificence Henry was distinguished by his grave and modest bearing. Clad in a purple gown, he rode soberly with a small retinue of his personal friends; whilst the princes who were his prisoners came behind in state with a guard of soldiers. He would not permit any songs to be made in his own praise. Nor would he suffer "his bruised helmet and his bended sword," which he had worn at Agincourt, to be borne before him, as the nobles wished; lest at the sight of them his people should forget the glory which was due to God alone. At St. Paul's he dismounted, and fourteen bishops all "revessed * and mitred" met him and sang a "Te Deum" for his victory.

After the King had made his offering, the procession re-formed, and the Mayor and Aldermen escorted him out of the City. And so Henry came to Westminster, where he gave thanks again at the shrine of St. Edward in the Abbey, and that night held a feast in the Hall.†

The rapture of the people was not for their

* *I. e.* in their festal vestments.

† Elmham, *Vita*, p. 72; *Liber Metricus*, pp. 125–129; *Gesta*, p. 68; *Chron. Lond.*, p. 103: "On the morwe the maire and alle the aldermen, with too hundred of the best comoners of London, wente to Westminster to the Kyng and present him with a thousand pound, in two basins of gold worth five hundred pound."

glorious victory alone, but was a sign of how the nation's heart had gone out to its King. There was no memory of any Prince, who had ruled his people in war with more personal labour, kindliness, or courage, or who had borne himself more manfully in the field. Neither was there record in the Chronicles and Annals of old that any King of England had gone forth and performed so much in so short a time, and returned again to his own with so great and so glorious a triumph.*

* *Gesta*, p. 60.



# CHAPTER XI

## HENRY V. AND SIGISMUND

### 1415–1416

IF Henry's triumph had given him a firm hold on the affections of his subjects, it had also made him in a sense the arbiter of Western Europe. After so striking a victory it might seem at first sight as though he had no more to do than forthwith to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion. But the patience with which Henry now devoted himself to eighteen months of diplomacy and preparation enables us to realise both the far-reaching aims of his policy and his own constructive genius. The campaign of the previous summer had been necessary to establish his position at home and abroad. It had, however, taxed severely the resources of the kingdom; and a further period of preparation was required before such a war of conquest, as Henry intended, could be renewed with a fair prospect of success. No doubt also Henry understood that the first step to the conquest of France was to establish the naval supremacy of England in the Channel; for this reason alone he must in any case have deferred his second invasion over the

coming year.* But it was still more important so far as possible to isolate the French Government, and to secure his own position by a network of alliances.

At home Henry's personal popularity made the task of government easy, and he was able to carry still further his policy of reconciliation. The young Earls of March and Huntingdon were rewarded for their services in the war by their final restitution to their honours and estates. The heir of Hotspur, who had long been a prisoner in Scotland, regained his freedom in December, 1415, by an exchange for Murdach, son of the Regent Albany, and was soon afterwards restored to his grandfather's earldom and the King's favour. Henry would gladly have extended his agreement with Albany to cover the restoration of the young King James, and so secure a friendly neighbour on the Northern Marches; but his motions for that purpose, though steadily pursued, were for the time of no effect. On the Welsh border affairs were now so peaceable that Gilbert Talbot was once more commissioned to offer terms to Glendower and his last adherents. Oldcastle, on the other hand, was still in hiding, and intriguing, when opportunity offered, with the enemies of the King's peace. But no serious danger was now to be apprehended from that quarter. The feeling of the nation as represented in Parliament was on the King's side, and no note of discord broke the general harmony. When the

* Cf. *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 5 vo, and *Libel of English Policy*, ap. *Pol. Songs*, ii., 200.

"Of see kepynge, entendynge victorie,
* * * * * *
No better was prince of strenuité."

Chancellor Beaufort opened the Parliament of November, 1415, he took for his text, "As he hath done unto us so also let us do unto him," and dwelling on the King's continual labours for the preservation of law and justice and the peace of the land, appealed for a generous support of his master's foreign policy.* The Commons responded by voting supplies with reasonable liberality, and granted the King the Customs for life. The speech of the Chancellor in the subsequent Parliament of March, 1416, was pitched in the same warlike strain and seems to have met with full approval. There was little mention of domestic legislation in either assembly; a firm and orderly government at home and a spirited foreign policy satisfied the interests and ambitions of the nation.

In France Burgundy hoped to turn the disaster of Agincourt to his own advantage. The death of his two brothers had stirred him for the moment to wrath against the English King. On the other hand he thought, through the heavier losses of the rival faction, to secure for himself undisputed authority. But his plans were defeated by the energy of Bernard, Count of Armagnac, who brought up his Gascon followers from the South and obtained from the King the baton of Constable. Louis the Dauphin died in December, 1415, and was succeeded by his brother John, who had been educated at Burgundy's Court and was betrothed to the Duke's niece Jacqueline, daughter of William of Holland. Nevertheless the Armagnacs retained control of the government in the King's name, though with some-

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 62.

what divided counsels. The more moderate party led by the Duke of Berri might have been inclined to seek peace; but they were dependent on the support of Count Bernard, who advocated with consistent vigour a policy of revenge.

The domestic quarrels of the French were, however, for the time of less importance. The most interesting figure in the history of the next twelvemonth was Sigismund, the Emperor-elect. Sigismund of Luxemburg, the second son of the Emperor Charles IV., at his father's death in 1378 became Margrave of Brandenburg, and in 1387 through his marriage to Mary of Anjou secured the crown of Hungary. In 1411 he replaced his brother Wenzel as King of the Romans, and from that date endeavoured to pursue such a truly international policy as became the civil head and guardian of Christendom. In spite of many weaknesses, he was capable of lofty ideals, and laboured with sincere devotion to end the Great Schism, and secure such a reformation of the Church in its head and members as the opinion of moderate men required. The ecclesiastical policy which he thus set before him was, however, complicated by the network of secular interests in which the Papacy was entangled. France, England, Germany, the Italian princes and the Kings of the Spanish peninsula had separate interests which Sigismund must appease or reconcile before he could achieve his object. On the other hand, fortune favoured him in many things. Pope John XXIII., through fear of the King of Naples, was forced to throw himself into the Emperor's arms. The traditional

alliance between the imperial line of Luxemburg and the royal House of France, and the aspirations of Gallican churchmen for some moderate measure of reform helped him at Paris. Henry of England had not only a sincere sympathy for Sigismund's plans, but was, for political reasons, also anxious to secure his friendship. Still, with all these advantages it was no small triumph for Sigismund when he assembled the representatives of Christendom at Constance in November, 1414. The diversity of interests that were there brought together, and the necessity of maintaining at least the show of harmony, explain, if they do not justify, the tortuous diplomacy which the Emperor pursued.

The primary object of the Council of Constance was to restore unity to the Church by ending the Great Schism. The first step in this direction was the deposition of Pope John in the early summer of 1415. At the beginning of July Gregory XII., one of the two schismatical Popes, resigned his office. A little later Sigismund left Constance for Perpignan to obtain, if possible, the submission of the remaining pretender, Benedict XIII. This journey was undertaken at the very time of Henry's invasion of France; but before its purpose was in some degree accomplished the victory of Agincourt had imposed a fresh task of mediation on the imperial diplomatist.

We must now turn back to trace the course of negotiations between Sigismund and Henry of England. On 26th February, 1411, at the time when Henry as Prince of Wales ruled England in his father's name, he had sent Dr. John Stokes and

Sir Hartank van Clux to treat with Sigismund for a regular alliance.* Viewed in the light of subsequent events, it is tempting to regard this embassy as a deliberate step in the foreign policy of the Prince and his advisers. If so, it was a return to the policy of Edward III., and an attempt to detach Sigismund from the traditional alliance of his family with France. At the time the embassy bore little fruit; but Hartank remained as a sort of English agent at the Court of Sigismund, and it was through his advice that in July, 1414, a second embassy was sent to the Emperor under Sir Walter Hungerford.† What actually passed on this occasion we can only guess, but it is probable that Hungerford's mission paved the way for the more important negotiations which were entrusted to the English envoys who went to the Council of Constance in the following October.‡ At the head of this latter mission were the Earl of Warwick and the three Bishops of Bath, Salisbury, and St. David's, who were directed to treat with Sigismund for a league and alliance. The English ambassadors made a splendid show, both when Sigismund was crowned at Aachen, and when the Council met at Constance. But whatever progress may have been made in private, no public result was achieved, and Sigismund himself was at this very time renewing his old

* *Fœdera*, viii., 674. Stokes was afterwards an English representative at the Council of Constance. Hartank van Clux was a Silesian knight who had been in the English service since 1400.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 155–6.

‡ *id.*, ix., 167–8. The bishops were Nicholas Bubwith, Robert Hallam, and John Catrik.



ROBERT HALLAM AND THE EARL OF WARWICK.

SENT AS AMBASSADORS TO CONSTANCE.

alliance with France. It is impossible to acquit the Emperor of a certain duplicity in his diplomacy. For the moment the pressure of ecclesiastical politics was overpowering, and hence, on 25th June, 1414, he had been forced to make an alliance with his Orleanist cousins who held power at Paris. On the other hand, imperial policy and perhaps his own inclinations urged him to keep the door open for an agreement with England; but what he did with this intention was of necessity secret. The progress that was made at Constance in the summer of 1415 and Henry's victory at Agincourt produced a material change in the situation.

In January, 1416, when Sigismund was at Lyons on his way back from Perpignan, he received an invitation to visit Paris. The French princes probably relied on their old friendship to secure his assistance in obtaining favourable terms from England. Sigismund on his part was, in the interests of the Council, anxious for peace,* and, as it would appear, accepted the rôle of mediator in all sincerity. There is no ground for supposing that he foresaw the position into which the events of the next few months would lead him.

It was on 1st March that Sigismund entered Paris. He was received with the greatest honour by the Duke of Berri and the other princes. But he must have recognised soon that his efforts in the French capital were not likely to be attended with much success. The Count of Armagnac somewhat

* Even before Agincourt he had advocated a peaceful agreement. Caro, *Aus der Kanzlei*, p. 111.

ostentatiously left Paris and renewed his warfare with the English before Harfleur. Armagnac's attitude and the divisions of the French princes were probably the starting-point for a change in Sigismund's policy. At all events, they determined him to visit England, which was not apparently part of his original intentions.*

Sigismund's decision to transfer the negotiations to London was arrived at about the end of March. On 8th April he left Paris, accompanied by a French embassy under the Archbishop of Rheims. Three weeks later he reached Calais, where the Earl of Warwick received him with such magnificence as to earn for himself the name of the "Father of Courtesy." On Thursday, 30th April, Sigismund, who was accompanied by a retinue of over a thousand persons, crossed over to Dover.† Henry had prepared to receive his imperial guest with the utmost distinction. But, if we could trust a late legend, Sigismund was not permitted to land till Humphrey of Gloucester had ridden into the water with drawn sword, and received from him a promise that he had not come as Emperor and made no pretence to exercise imperial authority in England.‡ On the following

* Cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 333. Safe-conduct for Scots envoys to go to Sigismund at Paris, dated 26th March.

† Wendecke ap. Lenz., p. 89. The whole retinue did not cross till 3rd May. The *English Chronicle*, (Cotton. MS., Cleop., C. iv., f. 28vo) says Sigismund was at Calais till 4th May.

‡ The story first appears in Redmayne and Hall, but only takes its final shape in Holinshed. It is possibly a sixteenth-century invention, though the historians of that time seem to have used some traditional information which has not survived elsewhere. The



THE EARL OF WARWICK AND THE EMPEROR SIGISMUND.

Tuesday Sigismund was met by Bedford at Rochester, and on the Wednesday by Clarence at Dartford. On Thursday, the 7th May, he made his entry into London. By Henry's orders the Mayor and citizens went out to greet him at Blackheath, the King himself, with his great lords, awaiting him at St. Thomas Wateryng. When the two monarchs had kissed and embraced each other, Henry took the Emperor by the hand, and so they came riding through the City of London to St. Paul's, where they made their offering. Then they took horse again and rode to Westminster, where the Emperor was lodged in the royal palace, whilst the King himself lay at Lambeth.*

Sigismund, for all his fitful earnestness, was fond of state and pleasure, so that the royal magnificence of his reception was much to his liking. The Parliament, which had been adjourned before Easter that it might still be in session at the time of the Emperor's visit, reassembled on 11th May. If, as seems likely, Sigismund witnessed the opening ceremony, he enjoys the distinction of being the only Emperor who was ever present on such an occasion.

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notion that the King of England was "Emperor of his own" was not unfamiliar in the reign of Henry V. See Page, *Siege of Rouen*, p. 24:

> "He ys Kyng excellent
> And unto none othyr obedyent,
> That levythe here in erthe be ryghte,
> But only unto God almyght,
> With-yn hys owne Emperoure
> And also Kyng and conqueroure."

* *English Chronicles*, Cotton. MSS., Claudius, A. viii, f. 4 v°, and Cleopatra, C. iv., f. 29 v°.

It soon became evident that the course of negotiations would be protracted, and Parliament accordingly dispersed, whilst the King devoted his attention to the entertainment of his pleasure-loving guest. The Feast of S. George, which had been purposely postponed, was celebrated with unusual state at Windsor on 24th May, Henry yielding the chief place at the table and in the chapel to the Emperor. Sigismund was then invested with the Garter, an honour which he so much esteemed that he ever thereafter wore the collar of that order in all assemblies.

On 28th May, at Sigismund's request William of Holland came to England to assist in the negotiations, which were now begun in good earnest. As a basis for peace it was proposed that Harfleur should be put in the hands of Duke William and the Emperor, to hold for a term of three years pending a final conclusion. For this arrangement the assent of the French princes, then prisoners in England, was sought, but was not forthcoming; probably they were offered their liberty at the price of recognising Henry's claims to the French throne.* Their refusal and their false machinations were the reasons which Henry alleged in public for the failure of his negotiations.† But, apart from this, the scheme did not commend itself to popular opinion, and the mere rumour of what was afoot caused much mur-

* *Fœdera*, ix., 427–30; Cousinot, *Gestes des Nobles*, pp. 135–6. Sigismund says expressly that the French princes took part in the negotiations. Cf. *Aus der Kanzlei*, p. 113.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 362.

muring.* Still more serious for the cause of peace was the conduct of the French; not only was Armagnac besieging Harfleur, but his Genoese allies were actually threatening the English shores. Henry at once determined to take the sea in person; whilst William of Holland, finding his position untenable, went back somewhat abruptly to his own country. To Sigismund it was clear that his efforts for peace must fail, unless he could obtain a definite assurance from the French Government. With this purpose he sent an embassy to Paris on the 21st June, to propose a basis for further negotiation on his own and Henry's behalf; William of Holland was still in name associated in their proposals. With the imperial ambassadors went the Sire de Gaucourt, who had on a previous occasion acted as a go-between for Henry in French affairs; at the same time the Archbishop of Rheims and his colleagues also returned to Paris.

The proposals, which the imperial ambassadors were commissioned to make, consisted in the first place of a general truce with a view to a meeting between the Kings of France and England. If this was accepted,

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Cleopatra, C. iv., f. 29vo. "In ye firste weke of Joyn next suying ye kyng hade suche covnceile yt he schulde have gove ye kepynge of the tovne of harflew to ye Emperower and to the duke of holonde as hit was sayde for a certayn tyme; ffor ye whiche covnceils and graunte ye commones were ful sore and draddyn of strong treson yt myzt fall to ye reme, and grochedede wt hole herte, wherof owre kyng had wityng. And yan oure Kynge examenyd better this mater of ye ffrensshmen yt were prisoners here, and yan was it wel knowen to owre Kyng and Emperowre and to the duke of holonde yt hit was hyz falsnesse and treson unto owre lond yt ye ffrensshmen ment."

the Archbishop of Rheims and the Sire de Gaucourt were to notify Sigismund within three weeks of their departure from London, and the place for the interview was to be fixed within a further period of ten days.

These proposals were discussed at length by the French princes. The moderate party, whose weight the recent death of the Duke of Berri had weakened, would have accepted them without demur. But Armagnac met them with a warlike and eloquent harangue: Henry and his allies were not to be trusted; they sought peace only that they might prepare fresh war; it was French policy to pursue the advantages they had lately gained before Harfleur. Eventually a compromise was arranged. De Gaucourt * was to take back such an answer as would prolong the negotiations for peace, whilst Armagnac and his Genoese allies were to be at liberty to continue the war. A temporising message was sent accordingly, and arrangements made for a conference with English representatives at Beauvais towards the middle of July. † So short-sighted and hypocritical a policy was worthless against an adversary so wary and energetic as Henry.

At the end of June Henry had gone to Southampton to prepare for his intended expedition, whilst Sigismund found a pleasant resting-place at Leeds in Kent. On the receipt of de Gaucourt's illusory report Henry hastily rejoined the Emperor.

* *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 18–22; *Aus der Kanzlei Sigismund*, pp. 99–100.

† *id.*, p. 101, date 7th July; *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 22–6.

The news that a Genoese fleet was threatening the Isle of Wight followed quickly; a few days later came a report that the English envoys had been received with very scant courtesy at Beauvais, and that the French had found a pretext not to conclude the truce as agreed upon.* Such a revelation of French policy brought matters to a crisis. Henry ordered his intended expedition to be pushed on with renewed vigour, though he resigned the command to his brother Bedford. Sigismund on his part abandoned the task of mediation and threw himself fully into Henry's plans. On 15th August a formal treaty of alliance between the Emperor and English King was concluded at Canterbury. In the preamble Sigismund declared that during six months he had laboured sincerely for peace and the unity of the Church, but had met with nothing but snares and delusions. His imperial rights and Henry's just demands had been alike disregarded. Therefore he now made an offensive and defensive alliance with the English King, in which the two parties pledged themselves to mutual support for the recovery of their claims against France.† This treaty shows that Henry and Sigismund no longer entertained any hopes of a peaceful settlement. But they did not draw back from the conference which had in the meantime been arranged to take place at Calais, and at which it was expected that the Duke of Burgundy would be present.

* *Aus der Kanzlei*, pp. 103, 107.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 377–81; cf. *Aus der Kanzlei*, pp. 105–7, and 109–23, a letter to Charles VI., giving the Emperor's account of the negotiations of the last six months.

On 24th August Sigismund crossed over to Calais, where ten days later Henry rejoined him. On 7th September the Archbishop of Rheims arrived, as had been arranged at Beauvais. But there was hardly any pretence at treating for a genuine peace. The French envoys made a proposal almost humorous in its audacity; let Sigismund purchase peace from Henry by a donation out of the ancient lands of the Empire, and the gratitude of their master would know no bounds. What this meant was that Henry should obtain compensation at the expense of Burgundy; an arrangement which, however gratifying to the Armagnac Government at Paris, can scarcely have been seriously intended. But neither side desired immediate hostilities, and the negotiations ended naturally in a general truce to last from 9th October till 2nd February, 1417.* The French ambassadors left Calais on 3rd October, and three days later Burgundy arrived.

The negotiations with Burgundy were in reality the chief purpose of the conference at Calais. With that double-dealing prince Henry had found it expedient to maintain continued relations. John the Fearless deserved no trust, and Henry cannot have trusted him. But his aid could be purchased, and this no doubt was Henry's intention. Burgundian envoys had been present in England almost the whole of the year. The truce with Flanders had been prolonged for a twelvemonth in June, and in August Bishop Catrik, when on his way back to Constance, was instructed to visit the Burgundian Court

* *Fœdera*, ix., 387, 397–401.

and arrange for the conference at Calais.* John was himself too treacherous by nature to put any confidence in others. He would not appear at Calais until Humphrey of Gloucester became a hostage for his safety. The princes met at the ford of the Aa at Gravelines and passed each other in midstream. At Calais Burgundy spent a whole week, and had many long and secret interviews with the Emperor and English King. Henry was apparently so confident of his power to secure the support of John, that he had documents ready drafted for signature, in which the Duke was to pledge himself to further the English cause in France.† What passed at the interviews did not transpire, but probably the popular opinion which ascribed their failure to Burgundy's manifest duplicity was not far wrong. The Duke left Calais on 13th October and at once busied himself with a new intrigue for his own aggrandisement. On 12th November he met the Dauphin and his father-in-law, William of Holland, at Valenciennes, where they concluded a league against the Armagnacs. But the death of the Dauphin early in the following year put an end to this scheme, and Burgundy fell back on his old plan for an agreement with England.

The conference at Calais broke up immediately after Burgundy's departure. Sigismund went back to Germany by way of Dordrecht, mightily pleased with his new alliance. Henry's kingdom, as he told the English envoys at Constance, was Paradise in comparison to any place he had ever visited ; "from the highest unto the lowest he commended your

* *Fœdera*, ix., 328, 352–4, 374. † *id.*, ix., 394–6.

glorious and gracious person, your realm and your good governance." *

Henry himself crossed over to England on 16th October, just in time for the meeting of a new Parliament. The Treaty of Canterbury was laid before the Commons and solemnly ratified and confirmed. † Such a proceeding was no doubt only a formality; still, it has its significance both as showing how Henry took his people into his confidence and how fully he had identified them with his policy. The policy was entirely his own; his was the energy that had frustrated the duplicity of the French princes; his was the skill and magnetic influence that had won over Sigismund from the traditional alliance of his family. How completely Henry was his own foreign minister appears also from a document, wherein he records for the Emperor's information the secret negotiations which he had personally conducted with the French princes in England. ‡

The Treaty of Canterbury was in itself a diplomatic victory of the first importance. Yet it was only

* *Fœdera*, ix., 435.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 96.

‡ *Fœdera*, ix., 427–30. As this document is avowedly Henry's own composition, it is worth quoting the opening and ending words: "*Tiptoft.* I charge yow, by the Feith that ye owe to me, that ye kepe this Matere, her after Writen, from al Men secre save from my Brother Th' Emperor owne Persone; that never Creature have Wittyng thereof, withowt myn especial Commandement, of myn owne Mouthe, or els Writen with myn owne Hand, and Seelyd with my Signet: . . . . . And, for the secreness of this Matere, I have writen this Instruction wyth myn owne Hande, And seled hit with my Signet of th' Egle, the 25 Day of Januar, that is the Day of Conversion of St. Paule."

the pivot on which a wider scheme revolved. The minor negotiations of the year were of necessity left to agents; but Henry's was the far-seeing genius which contrived them all as parts of a general plan. A treaty of alliance was concluded with the Archbishop of Cologne, whose support was secured by the promise of an annual pension. Negotiations were opened with the Hanse and the chief princes of Germany. The friendship of Venice was confirmed by the concession of commercial privileges. Steady efforts were made to withdraw the Genoese from their alliance with the French Government, and Sigismund's influence was especially enlisted on this behalf. More than one embassy was despatched to the princes of the Spanish peninsula; a treaty was made with the King of Aragon; ambassadors were directed if possible to conclude an alliance with Castile, or at all events to obtain a truce between that kingdom and Portugal, the ancient ally of England, and if it might be to detach Castile from its friendship for France. All these seemingly separate negotiations had one end in view; so to isolate the French Government that the English King might be free to prosecute his schemes of conquest without fear of complication.

Henry's diplomacy was not entirely successful. Neither the Republic of Genoa, nor the King of Castile would consent to abandon their old traditions. Burgundy could not be induced to commit himself to support the English cause in France. But the general results were sufficiently striking. The French Government at Paris had been

unmasked, and the duplicity with which it devised war whilst it talked of peace exposed. Henry could, with some show of justice, claim to be the injured party who had laboured in all sincerity for peace. He stood next to Sigismund as a champion of orthodoxy, and as a political power even Sigismund himself had to yield him the first place. His diplomatic victory was not less important than the triumph at Agincourt, of which it was indeed the first fruit and the complement.



# CHAPTER XII

## THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

### 1416–1417

IN the last chapter, reference has been made incidentally to the warfare which from time to time frustrated the endeavours of Sigismund to arrange terms of peace. With the personal history of Henry V. that warfare has no direct concern, yet some account of it is necessary, as well to illustrate the negotiations of 1416 as the naval policy of the King. Though there were skirmishes between the French and English in the neighbourhood both of Bordeaux and Calais, the main interest centres round Harfleur. The English garrison under Dorset held nothing but the town; their military operations were therefore of subsidiary importance. The real struggle was for the command of the Channel, and the events of the year afford an interesting illustration of the importance of sea-power in war.

Dorset had, as captain of Harfleur, a force of three hundred men-at-arms and nine hundred archers. Soon after his return to England, in November, 1415, Henry had sent over store of provisions and

money. But the maintenance of an isolated garrison in a hostile country was no easy matter, and Dorset found himself hard pressed for supplies. He was thus compelled to make constant raids into the country, during one of which, so early as 18th November, 1415, he advanced to within a few miles of Rouen. On that occasion, and again a few days before Christmas, the English forays were highly successful.* But early in the spring the Constable Armagnac came to Normandy with the intention to press the war vigorously, and if possible to achieve some result that should frustrate the peace-seeking policy of his political rivals at Paris. During the second week in March, Dorset, who was still in sore need of victuals, made a foraging raid beyond Fécamp as far as Cany towards Dieppe. His expedition had been successful, and he was on his way back to Harfleur when Armagnac suddenly came upon him near Valmont.

Dorset had not much over a thousand men, whilst the French were more than three times as numerous. However, he prepared for battle in the traditional English way, with his baggage in the rear, his men-at-arms on foot in the centre, and the archers *en herse* on either wing. Hardly was his line formed when Armagnac's heavy cavalry came charging down. The English archers were powerless to check their onslaught. The French swept victoriously through the little company of men-at-arms in the centre, and fell to plundering the baggage train and massacring the valets who were holding their mas-

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Cleopatra C., iv., ff. 27–28.

ters' horses in the rear. Dorset, though badly wounded, rallied his men and drew them off to the shelter of an orchard hard by. To the herald who was sent to offer terms he answered haughtily: "Go tell your master, that Englishmen never surrender." His position was nevertheless precarious; he had few horses and the enemy held the direct road to Harfleur. There was nothing for it but to march home by the longer way round the coast. Under cover of night the English contrived to steal off unobserved, though Armagnac had ordered the Maréchal de Longny to watch their movements. At daybreak they had reached the Chef de Caux, and thought to get back to Harfleur without further fighting. But Longny had followed them and now once more barred the road. Thus brought to bay, the English, though hungry and weary, charged desperately up the hill on which the French were posted. Longny's detachment was overwhelmed before Armagnac could come to the rescue, and so Dorset, in spite of heavy losses, returned to Harfleur. Both sides claimed the victory, but whilst the English had the best of it in the actual fighting, the practical results rested with the French. Armagnac held the country up to the very walls of Harfleur, and Dorset had to send an urgent message for reinforcements to England.* This fighting took place on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th March, whilst Sigismund was at Paris; and it was

* *Chron. St. Denys*, v., 750–760; *Gesta*, pp. 69–72; *Chron. Norm.*, pp. 173–174; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 314–315; *English Chron.*, Cotton. MS., Cleop. C., iv., f. 28.

probably the news of Armagnac's success that determined the Emperor to transfer his negotiations to England.

The French Government realised that their surest means of defence was to hold the command by sea.* They had negotiated accordingly with the Genoese, who were the most skilful mariners of the day, and obtained a fleet of nine great carracks, three hundred transports and galleys, and a large number of smaller vessels. Five thousand crossbowmen were also hired in Spain and embarked on board the fleet, which reached the Seine about the end of April. Harfleur was now closely besieged by land and sea, and the French hoped to starve the garrison into surrender. Henry was, however, fully alive to the danger, and early in May ordered an ample supply of arms and provisions to be despatched.† By a simple stratagem the ship that carried this relief managed to get into Harfleur. She sailed through the blockading lines flying the white cross of France at her prow, and when the zone of danger was passed ran up the red cross in its place and safely entered the harbour.‡

During May, the stringency of the siege was somewhat relaxed, for Armagnac was called away to Paris, and therefore concluded an armistice for one month. The truce was, however, confined to Harfleur, so that the main part of the Genoese fleet was free to

* Des Ursins, p. 333.

† The arms included 1000 bows, 2000 trusses of arrows, 100 gross of bowstrings. Cf. *Add. MS.* 4601, f. 49.

‡ *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 12–14.

harry the English coast and commerce in the Channel. To meet the danger thus threatened, the Earl of Huntingdon was on 12th May ordered to equip a fleet, and after relieving Harfleur to keep the sea and not put into port except under stress of weather. Commissions of array were also ordered for the protection of the Isle of Wight and the western counties, and beacons were to be provided to give timely warning of the enemy's approach.* But before Huntingdon was able to take the sea, the Genoese fleet appeared off the English coast and laid waste the Isle of Portland. At other points the enemy were repulsed with severe loss, and an attempt to fire the fleet in Southampton Water was also unsuccessful. These events happened early in June, at a critical moment for the peace negotiations then proceeding in London, to the failure of which they contributed materially.

Henry was now more than ever determined on vigorous action. Not only must the blockade of Harfleur be raised, but the Channel must also be cleared of the hostile fleet that preyed on English commerce and threatened to make any further invasion of France impossible. With this view, the King went down to Southampton on 30th June, to superintend the preparations in person. He had been there ten days, when the Sire de Gaucourt arrived in England with a message which seemed to show that the French were inclined towards peace. Henry, thinking that there was no further danger of war, at once joined Sigismund at Leeds. But

* *Fœdera*, ix., 344–345, 350.

within two days there followed the news that the enemy's fleet was blockading Portsmouth and plundering the Isle of Wight. By Sigismund's advice Henry consented to leave the command of the fleet to Bedford, since the diplomatic situation more urgently required his personal attention.

The fleet was ready to sail early in August. Part of it lay in Southampton Water and part of it in the Camber off Rye. Contrary winds for some days delayed their departure. But at last the two squadrons met together off Beachy Head, and with a favourable breeze stood across the Channel. On the evening of 14th August, the English fleet entered the Seine. As soon as his ship had dropped anchor, Bedford showed a light at the masthead for the guidance of the other vessels. Under cover of night he then sent some small rowing boats to reconnoitre the hostile fleet, and when he had discovered its position gave orders for a general attack on the morrow. At dawn the two fleets lay face to face in the Seine, and without more manœuvring met in midstream. The great Italian carracks, with their tall sea-castles at poop and fore, towered spear-high above the decks of the English. But our sailors, nothing daunted, laid their ships alongside, and grappled them fast to those of the enemy. Hand to hand they fought with lance and sword from the decks, or rained down arrows and other missiles from the fighting-tops. For five hours the battle was stubbornly contested. In the end some of the enemy's ships were boarded, whilst the others sought safety in the shoals near Honfleur. Three great carracks



A FIGHT AT SEA.

and many smaller vessels were taken, and one carrack, the *Mountnegrie*, which had been badly crippled in the fight, ran upon a sand-bank and foundered. The battle over, Bedford sailed triumphantly into Harfleur, and when he had victualled the town returned with his prizes to England.

Bedford's victory was so far complete that the siege of Harfleur was raised, and the remnant of the French and Genoese fleet withdrew to Brest. But the Channel was not yet secure. Whilst the negotiations were proceeding at Calais in September, a great carrack was sighted in the offing under full sail to Sluys. The Earl of Warwick, Sir Gilbert Umfraville, and other knights hastily manned six balingers and pinnaces and put out to sea. On the following morning they came up with the enemy. All day the little English vessels fought with their great opponent till, when night drew on and their ammunition was spent, they were compelled to abandon the unequal contest. But about the same time the men of Dartmouth were more fortunate; for a great carrack of Genoa was driven on shore by the weather, and captured with all her rich cargo of merchandise.

In the summer of 1417 the Genoese and French fleets were still in sufficient force to be a serious danger to the intended expedition. So in June the Earl of Huntingdon was put in command of a fleet to cruise in the Channel. On the 29th, he fell in with the enemy off La Hogue. The whole long summer day the two fleets fought together, charging with such violence that some ships had their tall castles

carried away by the force of the collision. At last the English had the victory. Four great carracks were captured, and the Bastard of Bourbon, who commanded the French fleet, was taken prisoner. The remainder of the Genoese ships fled to the harbours of Brittany, and did not venture any more to take the sea. However, when the expedition of 1417 had landed in Normandy, Henry still thought it prudent to order the Earl of March, after escorting the transports home, to "skim"* the sea lest any enemies should "defoule his navy, enter his land, or distrouble his voyage."† But the only danger that March encountered was a storm, in which he lost two carracks and two balingers with all their crews and merchandise, whilst another carrack "drove before Southampton and threw her mast over the town walls."

We do not hear any more of serious fighting in the Channel during the reign of Henry V. The Genoese fleet had been driven out of the narrow seas, and the Republic was before long glad to treat with the English King for peace. In 1419 some danger was feared from an intended Spanish Armada, and during that same year the western counties had orders to equip vessels to prevent the Scots from sending help to France.‡ But these incidents were of minor importance. The command of the sea had been fully secured and was carefully maintained. Henry could henceforth pursue his warfare by land without fear of danger to his communications by sea.

* To "skim the sea" means to cruise: a "scummer" was a "rover."

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., ff. 5$^{vo}$, 6$^{vo}$.

‡ *Fœdera*, ix., 702, 783, 791, 793.

We cannot justly claim for Henry, as some have done, the title of founder of the Royal Navy. The organisation of the Admiralty is of much older date, and there had not for a long while past been any time at which the King's ships did not form the nucleus of the national force. But for more than a generation the needs of the navy had been neglected, and the French and Spaniards had been permitted to gain the upper hand. Henry V. saw the folly of such a policy, and deserves the credit of being one of the first to realise the importance to England of the command of the sea. Early in his reign the protection of English maritime interests had received attention, and later on the position of affairs at Harfleur brought home to him the necessity of establishing the national force on a more permanent footing. If he was not actually the founder, he was at all events the restorer of the Royal Navy. Henceforth, however negligent might be the practice, it was in theory the aim of every English Government:

"That wee be maysters of the narowe see." *

The national necessity in time of war had been met commonly by the impressment of ships from the mercantile marine. It was by such means that the fleet which cruised in the Channel under Thomas of Lancaster, in 1405, had been assembled. Though some of the King's ships had served on that occasion, such protection as English commerce received during

*_Libel of English Policy_, ap. _Pol. Songs_, ii., 158. Cf. _id._, ii., 202.

"Kepe than the see, that is the walle of Englond,
And than is Englond kepte by Goddes sonde."

the reign of Henry IV. had depended rather upon the exertions of privateers like the notable Harry Pay of Poole. But the growth of privateering as a way of resisting the Spanish or French pirates had proved to be an aggravation rather than a remedy for the evil. The necessity for the better keeping of peace at sea, which was impressed upon Henry by his Parliament, must have supplied the first motive for an increase in the Royal Navy. An additional reason was found when the French Government brought into the Channel a hired fleet from Genoa. Ships were building for the King at Ratcliffe below Tower in 1411, and during the early years of the following reign the naval programme was further extended. Henry V. not only added to the numbers of the royal ships, but the vessels which he built were themselves more powerful than any which his predecessors had possessed:

> "Henry the Fifte, what was hys purposynge,
> Whan at Hampton he made the grete dromons,
> Which passed other grete ships of all the Commons,
> The 'Trinitie,' the 'Grace Dieu,' the 'Holy Ghost,'
> And other moo whiche as now be lost." *

The three great ships here mentioned apparently replaced smaller vessels of the same names that had been worn out.† The *Trinity* was Henry's flag-ship in the expedition of Agincourt, and like the *Holy*

* *Libel of English Policy*, ap. *Pol. Songs*, ii., 199.

† We hear of royal ships called *La Trinité de la Tour*, *La Godegrace*, and *Le Holy Gost*, in 1406. *Cf.* Wylie, ii., 101, 409. The two latter were balingers.

*Ghost* was built early in the reign.* The *Grace Dieu* was built in 1417, the Bishop of Bangor receiving five pounds for his expenses in going to Southampton for her benediction.† In 1419 a great ship was building for the King at Bayonne. She was to be 186 feet long; but the work had been so much delayed that she was not likely to be finished for four or five years. Sometimes ships were obtained from foreign building yards, and this same year Henry received a report on ten or twelve galleys that might be purchased at Barcelona, where also two new carracks were then building.‡ In February, 1417, a report to the Council of the "names of the King's ships and vessels" gives three ships, the *Trinity*, the *Holy Ghost*, and the *Nicholas*, three carracks, nine barges, and ten balingers. Six months later we have another list, in which there appear three great ships, the *Jesus*, the *Trinité Roiale*, and the *Holy Ghost*, besides eight carracks and sixteen smaller vessels. Probably neither list is complete; but the increased number of carracks is accounted for in part by the four prizes captured from the French by the Earl of Huntingdon.§

Of the different kinds of vessels the "great ships"

*Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, pp. 338, 339.

† *Id.*, pp. 349, 351. A payment of £500 was made towards the cost on the 14th March, 1417.

‡ Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., i., 69–72. In 1411 Henry IV. was treating for a Spanish ship at San Sebastian. *Cf.* Wylie, iii., 286.

§ These were the *Peter*, the *Paul*, the *Christopher*, and the *Andrew*. They are the first four in the list of August, 1417. Cf. *Gesta*, p. 87, note. Ellis, *Original Letters*, 3rd Ser., i., 72, 73.

and carracks were about 500 tons burthen and had two masts. These were the only ones which could at all compete with the Spanish and Genoese vessels in point of size. The lesser ships, "barges" and "balingers," in the royal service were usually from one to two hundred tons burthen. Other ships were called "cogs," a term which is applied less frequently to warships in the fifteenth than in the previous century, and "crayers," which were seldom over sixty tons burthen. When merchant vessels were impressed for the royal service, all above twenty tons were included. The fleet in 1415 is said to have numbered 1500 vessels, and that of 1417 was probably even more numerous. A list giving 238 of the vessels employed on the latter occasion has been preserved; one hundred and seventeen of these were hired from Holland, ninety-four beings cogs; the other hundred and twenty-one were English, and were smaller vessels, including fifty-four crayers.* The crew of a great ship like the *Trinity* might be eighty men, that of a barge or balinger would be from twenty to forty.† In addition, of course, each vessel carried a number of fighting men. When Sir Thomas Carew equipped a squadron of eleven ships, in February, 1417, he had 323 men-at-arms and 655 archers.‡ His largest ship had 75 men-at-arms and

* Hardy, *Rotuli Normanniæ*, pp. 320–329.

† In May, 1418, a fleet of 3 carracks, 2 great ships, 4 barges, and 6 balingers, had crews numbering in all 979 men and boys. Their pay for six months was £794. 13. 1.—Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, p. 555.

‡ He was assigned 616 men-at-arms and 1232 archers; but, as often happened, the full number did not assemble.



A SHIP OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

148 archers; a small barge had only four lances and eight archers. Ships of war had their high castles at poop and forward, and also carried fighting-tops for archers and crossbowmen. In most of the naval battles the hostile fleets grappled at close quarters, and the victory was decided by a hand-to-hand conflict of boarders. But guns were also used on shipboard, as they had been to some extent for nearly seventy years past. The *Trinité de la Tour*, in 1401, carried two large and one small cannon; and cannon were used in Bedford's fight at Harfleur, when the *Mountnegrie* was "rent and bored in the sides." *

Ships of war were as a rule splendidly decorated. They were often painted red and ornamented with the royal devices or arms. The *Holy Ghost* bore figures of the swan and antelope, both royal badges, and the *Cog John* had a crowned lion at the mast-head. The sails also were generally emblazoned with various devices; that of the *Katherine of the Towre* showed an "antelope climbing up a beacon," † and the vessel which was the "King's Hall," ‡ in 1417, had her sails worked with golden stars and painted with ostrich feathers.

With the development of the naval force under Henry V. there came also more elaborate provisions for its good governance. If it is not certain that the

* Wylie, iv., 232; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 81; *Chron. Davies*, p. 43.

† A beacon or cresset was one of the badges of Henry V. See plate, 30.

‡ *I. e.*, the ship which carried the royal household. Elmham, *Vita*, p. 96; Livius, p. 33.

ordinances for the office and duties of Admirals contained in the "Black Book of the Admiralty" were drawn up in their present form during Henry's reign,* yet we cannot doubt that his military legislation had its naval counterpart. The ordinances in the Black Book are certainly those which were observed at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Admiral was to bear a lanthorn at his masthead, as did Bedford at Harfleur, for the guidance of the fleet. The "banner of council" was to be the signal for the assembly of the captains on the Admiral's vessel, and the hoisting of the sail-yard half-mast high gave a fleet the order to prepare for departure.† The treatment of neutral vessels, the adjudgment of prizes taken from the enemy, whether by the King's ships or by privateers, the conduct and government of a fleet when at sea or off a hostile coast were all carefully provided for in detail. The stringent prohibitions against sacrilege and the molestation of women illustrate two points on which Henry laid special stress in his warfare. Similar clauses hold the first place in the military ordinances made in 1419 at Mantes, and both the military and naval ordinances have corresponding clauses to restrain unlicensed fighting and plundering. When the fleet was before a fortress or city none were to make an assault without the ordinance of the Admiral; when foraging parties were landed good order was

* In part at least they are older. But the most important MS. (Cotton. Vesp., B. xxii.) was written in the reign of Henry V., probably for the use of Thomas Beaufort.

† See above, pp. 126, 127, 184.

to be preserved, none were to cause any damage if not by the commandment of the Admiral, and all masters of ships were held responsible for the good behaviour of mariners whom they allowed to go ashore.

The emphasis which, in these Ordinances for the Fleet, is laid upon good order and discipline is eminently characteristic of Henry's administration in war. From the very circumstances of the case we cannot follow the workings of that administration so closely in naval as in military affairs. But Henry's success at sea, no less than on land, was due to his practical grasp of what was needed and to the skill with which he adapted his forces to the end that he had in view. His naval victories will not bear comparison with the two great battles of Sluys and Les Espagnols-sur-Mer, which rivalled the fame of Crecy and Poitiers. He was, however, fully alive to the importance of the command of the sea. So it was with just pride that a later generation looked back to the naval as well as to the military prowess of Henry V., and to the "great intent" with which

> "He caste to be
> Lorde rounde aboute enviroun of the see." *

* *Libel of English Policy*, ap. *Pol. Songs*, ii., 199.

# CHAPTER XIII

## MILITARY PREPARATIONS

### 1417

HENRY returned from the Conference of Calais with the knowledge that a renewal of the war was inevitable in the following spring. The intervening months would be occupied fully with the necessary work of preparation. The experience of the campaign of Agincourt had proved that the new enterprise would tax the resources of England to the utmost. There was, however, good reason to hope that effectual support would be received from other quarters. Sir John Tiptoft, who accompanied the Emperor to Germany, had obtained from Sigismund a definite promise to take the field in May.* Henry himself had renewed his negotiations with his French prisoners, and believed that he would be able still to turn the dissensions of his opponents to his own advantage. The Duke of Orleans, who first answered in the name of them all, declared that they neither might nor could know the King of England as their sovereign lord. But Bourbon, speaking for

* *Aus der Kanzlei Sigismunds*, p. 128.

himself, was more complaisant: and, on learning that Henry would "for the good of Peace renounce the right that he had now in the Crown of France" in return for certain lands and lordships, agreed, if he might have leave to go homewards, to use his influence in the English cause.* This plan was revealed in strict secrecy to Sigismund on 25th January, 1417, but does not seem to have led to any practical result. Probably its success depended on the hostility of the Armagnacs to the Dauphin John, who was allied by marriage to Burgundy. But the death of the young prince on 5th April, 1417, changed the position of French parties, and Burgundy reverted to his old policy of an English intrigue. Henry was quite ready to make terms with either faction, and in the interests of English commerce had always been the more inclined to treat with the overlord of Flanders. The negotiations, which were thus reopened, resulted in an extension of the existing Truce for Merchants, Fishers, and Pilgrims.† Burgundy was concerned only to secure immunity for his own dominions, whilst Henry was content with the knowledge that he need not fear any active hostility from the Duke.

To Sigismund Henry had declared that he would assent to nothing that was intended "but for delay of his voyage." Since the time of his return from Calais the task of preparing for a new campaign had occupied his attention. In January, 1417, letters

* *Fœdera*, ix., 427–430.

† *Id.*, ix., 449–479. The first instructions to the English envoys were dated 24th April.

of privy seal were issued calling for a return of men-at-arms and archers ready to serve in the war, and in February the sheriffs of the several counties had orders to complete the necessary indentures.* All were summoned to be present at Southampton by Whitsuntide, at the beginning of June. On St. Mark's Day—25th April—the King rode in state from Westminster to make his offering at St. Paul's, and take his formal leave of the Mayor and citizens.† Immediately afterwards he went down to Southampton in order to superintend in person the assembly and equipment of his host. The intended departure of the expedition was delayed by the necessity of dispersing the Genoese fleet with which the French held the Channel, and July was well advanced before the actual embarkation commenced.

The army which accompanied Henry on his second expedition to France was in numbers somewhat greater than that with which he had besieged Harfleur two years previously, and in its purpose it was much more ambitious. It was perhaps the largest and certainly the most elaborately equipped army that any English King had yet assembled. Contemporary historians put the number of those who sailed from Southampton in 1417 at 16,400 fighting men. Livius gives a list which, in conjunction with the Muster-Rolls preserved in the Record Office, enables us to fix the men-at-arms and archers at about 2300 and 7400 respectively.‡ The King's own re-

* *Id.*, ix., 433.

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 5.

‡ Livius, p. 31, gives 2256 lances, and 6810 archers. The

tinue of a thousand persons included miners and gunners; and many of the pages and serving-men were available as light cavalry for scouting and foraging. But with all allowances we can hardly believe that the effective force reached nearly 16,000 men, though that estimate may not be excessive as representing the whole number of those who landed in France. If to this we add the seamen who were required to man the huge fleet of fighting ships and transports, the total will have required an extraordinary effort on the part of a population of under three millions.

The army was no hastily assembled militia, but a carefully organised force with a commissariat and other services adapted to the needs of the time. The great nobles and simple knights each contracted in their degree to find so many lances and so many archers for the war. Equipment and pay were both in the first instance provided by the commander, who was to be recouped on a fixed scale from the royal treasury. Though claims were often left to run unpaid for years, the terms were so liberal that prudent men like Sir John Fastolf were able to amass large fortunes by their trade in war. The King

Muster-Rolls give about 1800 lances and 6000 archers; the numbers are differently computed by Williams (ap. *Gesta*, p. 265) and Ramsay, i. 251. Neither list is complete; Livius omits the contingents of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland; the Muster-Rolls those of the Duke of Clarence and the Lords Talbot and Ferrers of Chartley. Others like Sir Robert Babthorp do not appear in either list. However, in any case it is not probable that the totals much exceeded the numbers given in the text, which are those suggested by Sir. J. Ramsay from a comparison of the two lists.

bargained to provide shipping for men and horses without charge.* In theory there was one man-at-arms for every three archers, and this rule was usually observed in the indentures for service. But in practice the proportion was generally exceeded; in the Welsh campaigns† we find four or five bows to every spear, and at Agincourt there may have been as many.

The practice of arms was so common that the nobles and knights would have had little difficulty in raising their contingents. Moreover, though there can have been few survivors of the earlier French wars amongst those who fought at Agincourt, there must have been many who had served a long apprenticeship in Wales and on the Scottish March. Thus if Henry's army was not drilled in the modern sense, it was accustomed to strict discipline, and could march and manœuvre steadily in the face of the enemy. On the eve of Agincourt the long column wheeled into line and formed up in order of battle, when the French appeared on their right flank. In the same manner they marched out next day from Maisoncelles and drew up in the field;

* The daily wage was for a Duke 13*s.* 4*d.*, for an Earl 6*s.* 8*d.*, for a Baron 4*s.*, for a Knight 2*s.*, for a Squire or man-at-arms 1*s.*, and for an archer 6*d.*; the daily wage of a skilled artisan at this time was 5*d.*, and of a labourer 3*d.* The shipping was to be at the rate of 50 horses for a Duke, 24 for an Earl, 16 for a Baron, 6 for a Knight, 4 for a Squire, and for a horse-archer one only. At this rate there would have been 15,000 horses transported for the campaign of Agincourt. The number of serving-men must also, it is clear, have been much greater than of lances.

† *Cf.* Wylie, i., 342; ii., 18; iv., 243.

York, who led the van, taking as naturally the right wing as on the evening before he must have held the left. At Valmont, the only other pitched battle of Henry's campaigns, * the English line, when broken by the charge of the French cavalry, rallied without panic, and by skilful marching and hard fighting retrieved its position.

English tactics in battle were still those established by the tradition of Crecy. The knights and squires fought on foot, whilst their valets and pages held their horses in the rear. Where the force was sufficiently numerous, as at Agincourt, the men-at-arms were marshalled in three battalions, each with a body of archers on either wing. The archers were drawn up in the triangular wedge-shaped formation known as the "herse" or harrow, so that they might be able to use their weapon to full advantage.

"The ancient order of reducing archers into form by our most skilful and warlike ancestors was into hearses —that is, broad in front and narrow in flank, as for example, if there were twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five or more or fewer archers in front, the flanks did consist of seven or eight ranks at most. And the reason was this: that if they had placed any more ranks than seven or eight, the hinder ranks should have lost a great deal of ground in the volleys of their arrows at their enemies." †

* Except perhaps for the affair near Le Mans in March, 1420, about which we possess no particulars.

† Sir John Smythe, *Discourse concerning the Forms and Effects of Divers Sorts of Weapons*, written in 1590. The exact meaning and character of the "hearse" has been the subject of controversy, but its practical use seems clear. See *English Historical Review*, x., 538, 733.

This description makes it clear that the archers were drawn up in open order so that the rear ranks might have free play. As, moreover, the "hearses" were at an angle to the line of men-at-arms, they could shoot from a wider front and enfilade the attacking force of the enemy.

At Agincourt the position was an ideal one for the English tactics, since the flanks were well protected by villages and woods. The French repeated the same mistakes as they made at Poitiers, allowing themselves to be forced to fight in a cramped position, where the cavalry were ineffective, and the heavy men-at-arms charging on foot were at a hopeless disadvantage. At Valmont Armagnac used different tactics, thanks to his overwhelming numbers, with success; but he lost the fruits of his victory through lack of discipline. However, after Agincourt the French during Henry's lifetime never ventured to give the English battle on any important occasion. In the later campaigns siege followed siege with monotonous regularity.

The epoch of the Hundred Years War was in military matters, as in so many other respects, a time of transition. Its earlier stage witnessed the triumph of infantry armed with weapons of precision over the heavy feudal cavalry. During the campaigns of Henry V. gunpowder and cannon began to win the mastery over stone walls and castles. In both cases it was the victory of the offensive weapon over the defensive, of the arrow over armour, and of artillery over fortifications.

The longbow gave the English archers a suprem-

acy in the field as complete as that secured in recent times by the rifle. With their national weapon our men could shoot faster and farther than the mercenary crossbowmen in the French service, and could disable an armoured knight or his horse at a distance of three or four hundred yards. The victories of the English infantry in the Hundred Years War had, however, more than a military significance. They were the victories of a free people trained and practised in the use of arms. It was the growth of political freedom and national prosperity that made the existence of such a force possible. Sir John Fortescue no doubt repeated well-established principles of policy, when he declared that the might of England "standeth most upon archers, who need to be much exercised in shooting, which may not be done without right great expenses, as every man expert therein knoweth right well." So he argued that the security of the land depended on the prosperity of the common folk, and their capacity to "buy them bows, arrows, jacks and other weapons of defence." In this the English were unlike the French, whose King had no men of his own realm able to defend it, and was "compelled to make his armies of strangers as Scots, Spaniards, Aragoners, men of Almayn and of other nations." With justice did Fortescue condemn the unwise opinion of those who said that it was good for the King that the Commons were made poor. * The rulers of England, to do them justice, were fully aware of the importance of the national weapon and

* *Governance of England*, pp. 113–115, 137–140.

of the social organisation on which its use depended. A statute of Richard II., in 1389, amended under Henry IV. twenty years later, ordered that all servants and labourers should have bows and arrows, and practise shooting on Sundays and feast-days, instead of wasting their time on games of ball, quoits, dice or skittles. Other enactments regulated the importation of yew for bow-staves and the manufacture of bows and arrows.* Henry V. himself ascribed his victories — under God — chiefly to the valour and skill of the English archers.†

Besides his bow the archer had always some handy weapon at his belt; of defensive armour he had usually none, unless it were a steel cap and a leather quilted jerkin or jack. The equipment of the man-at-arms was more elaborate. Heavy plate armour with a gorget at the throat, palettes on the shoulders and close gauntlets for the hands, had now taken the place of the old mail. Under the tactics that prevailed in Henry's wars the English men-at-arms fought on foot in close order; their heavy armour made any offensive movement difficult if not dangerous, but was still serviceable for troops standing on the defensive in combination with archers. The long lance which had been the special weapon of the knight when he fought on horseback was, as the French learnt to their cost at Agincourt, a cumbrous and useless weapon to men on foot. In its stead we find the glaive, the halberd, the mace or pole-axe.

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* *Rolls of Parliament*, iii., 643.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 436.

The battle line was formed entirely of men-at-arms and archers. For skirmishing and foraging there were available the light horsemen or "hobblers," * who accompanied every expedition in great numbers. The large proportion of mounted men was a remarkable feature of the English armies, in which many even of the archers were provided with horses. This helps to explain the rapidity of Henry's movements, and the long marches that he was able to perform.†

So far as the forces in the field were concerned, there was not much difference between Henry's campaigns and those of his great-grandfather. Guns and gunpowder were coming into use slowly, but as yet had proved of little service in battle. The French are said to have had some small cannon at Agincourt, but apparently through want of skill got no advantage from them. A better instance is afforded at Pont de l'Arche in 1418, where Sir John Cornwall made correct use of his artillery to cover the passage of the river.‡ Cornwall's cannon, which could be safely placed in a small boat, can have been of no great size. Probably they were pelot-guns, or hand-guns, firing small balls of a few ounces in weight, and so light that two could be carried by

* So called because they rode hobbies or ponies.

† The distance from Harfleur to Agincourt was close on 250 miles; this was covered in fourteen and a half marches. There were two days of rest (16th and 20th October), and the greater part of 19th October was spent in crossing the Somme.

‡ See below, page 236. Somewhat similar was the use of the artillery in the attack on the Mills at Meaux, see page 358.

a horse.* Such weapons bear no comparison with the great guns used in sieges, which would discharge huge stone balls weighing a hundred pounds or more. In 1402 there is record of the purchase of 10,000 pounds of copper to make a gun for the King at a cost of £135. John of Burgundy had a great iron gun called "La Griete," which weighed 2000 pounds and required eight horses to drag it. These cannons were clumsy weapons enough, and it was thought somewhat of an achievement to fire a great gun once in an hour; probably they caused more alarm than actual damage. But whenever the besieging force could, as at Harfleur and Caen, place their cannon to advantage, the moral effect and destructive power of the new weapons proved irresistible.† Even when, as at Rouen, no attempt was made at a decisive bombardment, the use of guns of position helped to secure the besiegers against an attack from without. The French made use of cannon for defensive purposes in sieges, but mediæval fortifications were ill adapted to the modern artillery; this circumstance helped to give the attack the advantage in the sieges of the fifteenth century. Every great gun had its name, like "London," "Messenger," or "The King's Daughter." Guns were commonly mounted for action on flat wooden frames or trunks, and were

* In the Wardrobe Accounts for 1404 there appear 6 pelot-guns at 13*s.* 4*d.* each, and 200 pelottes of lead weighing 20 *lbs.* at 1*d.* each. Wylie, iv., 233.

† Hoccleve speaks of "grete gynnes that scheten now a days stones of so grete a pays (*peise* = weight) that no wal may withstonde them."

carted about on waggons. The gunners when at work were protected by shields of stout timber, which were raised when the gun was ready to be fired. Apparently the English were not well skilled in the use of artillery, for Henry's four master-gunners were hired from Germany.*

It is a strange contrast to find side by side with cannon and gunpowder the clumsy engines of mediæval warfare. Henry took with him to France not only the new artillery, but "tripgets" or "tribuchets" for casting stones and arrows, "sows" or pent-houses for use in approaching the walls of a fortress, and even the materials for "bastiles" or wooden towers intended for siege-fighting at close quarters. When circumstances permitted, sieges approximated to a modern type, and chief reliance was placed on a bombardment. But when the defence was obstinate, as at Meaux, resource was had to the old methods, and cannon and siege-castles, floating fortresses, mines, and "sows" were all made use of in turn.†

Whilst the actual fighting line was provided by indentures with the nobles and knights who raised, equipped, and commanded the units for which they made themselves responsible, subsidiary services such as the siege train, the engineers, the transport,

*Gerard Van Willighen, Hans Joye, Walter Stotmaker, and Drovankesell Coykyn; they had under them 25 gunners and 50 servitor-gunners. Nicolas, *Agincourt*, p. 386. In 1423 £40 was paid to four "gunnemeysters" from Germany, who had been long time in the late King's service. *Gesta*, p. 23, note. See also Wylie, ii., 266–267, iv., 230–233.

†See pp. 356–359.

and to a great extent the commissariat, were the direct care of the central government. Henry the Fifth's "Master of Works, Engines, Guns, and other Ordnance of War," was Nicholas Merbury, whose duty it was to see to the supply of a sufficient quantity of warlike stores, and to muster carpenters, smith, masons, and other labourers, who might be needed for the King's service. In the expedition of 1415 there were over 200 skilled artisans and labourers, besides 120 miners, probably trained men who had learnt their art in the Welsh war under command of their leader, Sir John Greindor. Apparently, however, the English lacked experience in the conduct of siege operations on a large scale, and this, perhaps, was the reason why in 1417 sixteen miners were hired from Liége.* Subordinate officers of the Master of the Ordnance were the Mailmaker, the Pavilioner, the Bowyer, the Sergeant-Carter, and the Sergeant-Farrier, each of whom had under his orders a number of skilled craftsmen.† The supply of warlike stores was the special duty of the Clerk of the Ordnance.‡ The actual superintendence of the military engineering,

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* *Cf.* note ap. *Gesta*, p. 114.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 200, 224, 248, 250. *French Roll*, ap. *44th Report of Dep.-Keeper*, pp. 568, 597.

‡ This was John Louthe, who in February, 1418, had orders to provide 7000 stones for guns, 300 great pavises (or shields) for the guns, 80 blocks, 7,000 tampions, 50 wooden yokes for oxen and 100 chains for use with them; 12 wains to carry the guns and 20 pipes of powder. He was also to procure 100 oxen and 320 horses with a proper quantity of harness and leather for repairs. A further order was for 400 caltraps and 300 pickaxes. Goose-feathers for arrows were pro-

bridging, entrenching, and field fortification belonged to the Controller of the King's household, Sir Robert Babthorp.

It was the duty of the royal officers to provide not only shipping for the voyage oversea, but to a certain extent also land transport for use in the field.* During the actual progress of a campaign the army was maintained by foraging and requisitioning from the country. But such a means of supply was too precarious to be depended on altogether, especially at the commencement of an invasion. On each of his great expeditions Henry took with him a vast store of provisions for immediate use ; and time after time we find him sending for supplies to England. During the siege of Harfleur Bedford fitted out ships and sent them to the Seine with corn for the King's use.† After the town had fallen the fishermen of Kent were ordered to cross the Channel with their boats and tackle to fish off the French coast for the support of the army.‡ When Henry lay before Rouen the citizens of London sent him a store of food and drink as a free gift.§ At other times English merchants shipped corn to Norman ports for the use of the army, whether at their own venture, or under contract with one of the great lords. ‖

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cured by requisitions to the sheriffs of the several counties, who at this same time were called on to supply 1,290,000 feathers by Michaelmas. *Fœdera*, ix., 436, 542–543, 653.

* *Fœdera*, ix., 248. Robert Hunt, Sergeant-Carter, to provide carts and wains for the King's use, May, 1415. † *Id.*, 310, 312.

‡ Devon, *Issues of Exchequer*, p. 342. § See below, page 246.

‖ *44th Rep. Deputy-Keeper*, pp. 621–623. *Cf.* p. 630 ; grain sent from Hull for the household of Sir James de Audeley.

Over and above the warlike services which were for the general benefit, the King's retinue included many officers of the royal household. There was the Master of the Horse, John Waterton, who had served with Henry in Wales; the King's Squire and the Yeomen of the Household; the Clerks of the Kitchen, the Scullery, and the Wardrobe, with their under-servants; the Dean of the King's Chapel, Master Edmund Lacy, with a number of Chaplains and Clerks whose duties were both secretarial and religious. Then there was John Clyff, the King's Minstrel, with seventeen other bandsmen, pipers, trumpeters, and fiddlers.* Of more importance for the war was the provision of a regular medical staff; Master Nicholas Colnet was the King's physician; his surgeons were Thomas Morstede and William Bradwardyn, each of the latter being accompanied by nine more of their trade.†

The chief officers of a feudal army were the Constable and the Marshal; but in England these dignities had lost much of their practical importance by becoming hereditary in the earldoms of Hereford and Norfolk. Under Henry V. the office of Constable was held by Thomas of Clarence,‡ whose position was in effect that of the King's principal lieutenant, or second in command. Theoretically

* Nicolas, *Agincourt*, pp. 387–389; *Fœdera*, ix., 253, 260.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 235, 237, 252, 363. The pay of the royal physician and surgeons was 1*s.* a day, the same as that of a man-at-arms or minstrel. No doubt also each great noble had his own leech. Cf. *44th Rep. Deputy-Keeper*, pp. 603, 615, 616.

‡ The earldom of Hereford being absorbed in the Crown, Thomas became the natural representative of the Constable.

the governance of an army in the field was still exercised through the Constable and Marshal. In practice Ordinances were issued by the King in person, or by the commander directly concerned, as occasion required. The general principles of military law were already established, but Henry was pre-eminent in his own time for the strict discipline which he maintained in his host. The formal publication of Ordinances marked the commencement of each campaign, as on the eve of the departure from Harfleur in October, 1415, and on the morrow of the landing in Normandy in August, 1417. The Ordinances published on the latter occasion, though they were perhaps of special importance, have not been preserved; probably, however, they did not differ materially from the code set forth at Mantes in the spring of 1419. It is characteristic of Henry's government that the first clauses of that code forbade all violence to churches, men of religion, and women. Protection was assured to merchants who came to the camp with victuals, and to day-labourers working on the land within the King's obedience; any pillaging in a district wherein peace had been proclaimed was to be punished by death. The billeting of the troops, the keeping of watch and ward, the taking and ransoming of prisoners, were carefully regulated. If any man was so hardy as to cry "Havock" (No quarter!), he that began was to be put to death and the remenant to be fined. If any cried "To horseback" in the host, he was to forfeit his best horse if he were a man-at-arms or horse-archer, and to lose his right ear if he were a

foot-archer or page. The Ordinances also dealt with the making of false returns at musters, the withdrawing of soldiers or servants from other masters, the wasting of victuals, making raids or assaults without licence, or fortifying any place without leave of the King. All the articles were to be cried in the host, and the King "willed that a copy be given to every lord and governor of men in the host, so that they may have plain knowledge and inform their men of the ordinances and articles." The Ordinances made by the Earl of Salisbury in Maine besides regulations against plundering and "for foragers in places dangerous," include some articles which apparently had reference only to the particular occasion; every captain was to see that his yeomen got each a substantial stake; every man was to make him a good faggot for use in bulwarks, and each captain was to see that his company had its proper number of faggots; every seven gentlemen or men-at-arms were to make them a good ladder and strong of fifteen rungs, and every two yeomen a pavys of boards, "that one may hold it whilst the other doth shoot." *

The assembly and ordering of his host may well have absorbed Henry's energies during the spring and summer of 1417. Even after Huntingdon's victory at sea had made the passage of the Channel safe, the departure of the expedition was still delayed by the work of final preparation. But at last all was ready, and the navy was gathered and

"well-stuffed with all manner of victuals for such a royal people as well for horse as for man, as longed for

* Nicolas, *Agincourt*, Appendix, pp. 30–43.

such a warrior : that is for to say Armore, Gonnes, Tripgetes, Sowes, Bastiles, Brigges of lether, Scalyng-ladders, Malles, Spades, Shovelles, Pykeys, Pavys, Bowes and Arowes, Bowe-stringes, Tonnes, Chestes and Pipes full of arowes as needed for suche a worthy werrior, that nothing was to seke whanne tyme come. And whan this was redy and his retinue come, the Kyng and his lordes with all his ryall host went to shippe and took the see and sailed in to Normandie." *

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 5 vo. For "Tripgetes," "Sowes," and "Bastiles" see page 205. "Brigges of lether" were pontoons of hide stretched on wicker frames, see page 236. "Malles" = mallets, "Pykeys" = picks. For "Pavys" see pages 206 and 210 and Plate 18.

# CHAPTER XIV

## THE CONQUEST OF LOWER NORMANDY

### 1417–1418

THOUGH Henry went on board his ship in Southampton Water, on 23rd July, the fleet probably did not sail till a day or two afterwards; for it was 1st August when the King landed for the second time in Normandy, at Touques, a small fortified place not far from the modern Trouville.

At first sight it may seem strange that Henry did not on this expedition make use of the base which he had secured and preserved at such great cost in Harfleur. The preference given to a position on the south bank of the Seine was, however, dictated by sound considerations of statecraft and strategy. It is true that Harfleur was the key of Normandy as commanding the mouth of the Seine. But an army advancing from Harfleur would have Rouen on its flank, and the siege of that great and strong city could not be attempted without adequate preparation. It was, moreover, important that the besiegers should have the command of both banks of

the river. On these grounds alone Henry's choice of a landing-place was well advised. There were further good reasons in its favour. When the left bank of the Seine was secured, the conquest of lower Normandy could be undertaken piecemeal. When lower Normandy was in English hands, the French position at Rouen could be turned and its communications with Paris severed. On political grounds also the campaign was wisely conceived; for it opened a way to command the neutrality of Brittany and to threaten the possessions of the Orleanist princes in Anjou. Henry's plan is thus significant of his far-reaching intentions, and reveals an essential difference between his warfare and that of his great-grandfather.

Henry celebrated his landing at Touques by dubbing forty-eight new knights. As soon as the army had disembarked the main fleet returned home under command of the Earl of March, whilst the ships that carried the siege train and warlike stores remained for a time in the Seine. There was in the Castle of Touques a small French garrison, which, after a brief siege, surrendered to the English on 9th August. A Council was then held to decide on the best commencement for the forthcoming campaign. Some apparently were in favour of an attack on Honfleur.* But that town was strongly garrisoned; and a reconnaissance had shown that its reduction

*A French historian (*Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 102) declares that Honfleur was actually besieged for many days and repulsed the English; this is clearly false, for Henry and his main force marched from Touques within a fortnight of landing. *Cf.* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 98.

would cost more time and trouble than the advantages that would accrue from its early possession were worth. Henry therefore resolved to advance first on Caen, a city which was not only important in itself, but from its position and fertile neighbourhood promised to afford convenient winter quarters.

Henry left Touques on 13th August and, making a wide detour to the south, only reached Caen five days later.* His chief purpose was to avoid the numerous streams which made the more direct route unsuitable for a large army.† At the same time he was able to clear the neighbouring districts of the enemy, and to cut off the city from its communications with Rouen and Paris. Meanwhile Clarence, who had been made Constable of the host and commanded the van, marched in light order by the shorter road along the coast. By his rapid advance he surprised the French garrison at Caen, drove in their outposts from the suburbs and captured St. Stephen's Abbey, the majestic house which owed its foundation to William the Conqueror. St. Stephen's, which was strongly fortified, stood on a hill just outside the walls of the city, and for military reasons the French commanders had determined to destroy it. Their intention was frustrated by one of the monks who, anxious to save his abbey, came secretly to Clarence and betrayed to him the weakest part of the walls where they might be easily scaled.

* His route was by Dives, Grentheville (where he spent the Sunday) Fontenes, Estouteville, Caen. *Cf.* Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 322, and Puiseux, *Siége de Caen*, p. 34.

† Livius, p. 35.

Thus St. Stephen's was captured on 17th August, and when Henry arrived next day he took up his quarters in the abbey, from the towers of which he could spy out all that went on in the city.

Whilst the King held the siege on the south-western side, Clarence moved round to the north-east, where he posted himself in the sister foundation of Queen Matilda at the abbey of the Holy Trinity. Between the King and Clarence on the north lay the Earl Marshal and Sir Gilbert Umfraville; on the south were the Earls of Warwick, Huntingdon, and Salisbury, and Humphrey of Gloucester at Vancelles. The English fleet soon arrived from Touques with the siege train on board; the artillery was landed and the bombardment at once commenced. The fortifications of Caen were strong; but they were commanded by the English positions, and the garrison within was weak and ill-provided. Quickly the great guns "beat down both walls and towers and slew much people in their houses and eke in the streets." * When the bombardment had made sufficient progress, and the weakness of the defence became manifest, Henry determined to assault the town. At daybreak on 4th September he attacked in force on the south; apparently to attract the attention of the garrison, whilst the real assault was delivered by Clarence on the north, where the approaches were easier. † In that quarter the walls

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 6. The concussion of the guns was so great that it shattered the windows of St Stephen's Abbey. *Cf.* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 105.

† It was here that Edward III., had carried the town seventy-one years before.

had been previously undermined and propped with timber. On the appointed day the timbers were fired; and when the walls, already weakened by the bombardment, collapsed, Clarence and his men scaled the northern suburb. By the bridge across the Odon the English fought their way right into the heart of the city, "sparing neither man nor child, and ever they cried 'A Clarence! A Clarence!'" * Then the garrison who were defending the southern walls were taken in the rear, and the gates opened to the King. Henry suffered his men to plunder at their pleasure, save only that they were to leave the churches untouched and offer no violence to priests or women.

"Thus," wrote the King to the Mayor of London, "on St. Cuthbert's Day, the Translation, God of His high grace sent into our hands our town of Caen, by assault and with right little death of our people. Whereof we thank our Saviour as lowly as we can or may, praying that ye do the same as devoutly as ye can, certifying you also that we and our host be in good prosperity and health, thanked be God of His mercy, Who have you in His keeping." †

The only Englishman of rank amongst those slain was Sir Edmund Springge, who scaled the walls on the King's side and performed prodigies of valour until he was hurled into the moat. As he lay there, helpless in his armour, the French threw down burn-

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton, MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 6 vo.

† Delpit, *Documents Français en Angleterre*, p. 220. I have modernised the spelling.

ing straw from the walls, and so roasted him alive. After the town was taken Henry had Sir Edmund buried honourably in St. Stephen's Abbey, near the tomb of the Conqueror.

Though the city was taken the castle still held out. But the commander soon made a composition to surrender, if no rescue came within ten days,* and on 20th September, Henry was master both of castle and town. The intervening period was not wasted. Gloucester was sent at once to Bayeux, which with fourteen other towns and villages made terms to surrender if no help came to the Castle of Caen within the appointed time.

Henry himself remained for a while at Caen, busy with the task of laying the foundations for the government of his new conquests. The garrison of the castle was allowed to march out with the honours of war. At the same time also many of the citizens departed, the King ordering that no man should be so hardy as to defoul any woman or to take any manner of goods from them on pain of death.† But the greater number accepted the terms which were offered to them, and swore obedience to their new sovereign. Henry had no desire to pose as a conqueror. It was a part of his own rightful heritage that he had now by God's help recovered. A country that was given over to military rule, and had neither husbandmen nor burgesses must speedily be ruined and worthless. So he ordered proclamation to be made, that whosoever in his duchy of Normandy

* *Id. ib.*; *Fœdera*, ix., 490–491.

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 6 vo.

would take oath to live as his liege subjects should enjoy his peace and protection. To all persons of religion his favour was specially extended, and his soldiers were strictly forbidden to offer them any violence. The news of such clemency had great effect, and with the advance of the English arms many hastened to avail themselves of the proffered terms. "If the King of England be the stronger," argued the Norman peasantry, "let him be our lord, so be that we may live in peace and the quiet enjoyment of our own." * Peace and security of property were blessings with which civil discord and excessive taxation had made the common folk unfamiliar. The strict order which Henry enforced, and his judicious remission of oppressive imposts gave his conquest a strange if transient popularity. There was, however, another side to the picture. For if Henry received those who made their submission with gentleness, he showed merciless severity to all who resisted him. So great was the terror of his name that when the English came to Lisieux they found there only one old man and a woman; all the rest had fled.

On 1st October, Henry set out from Caen and, marching by way of Coursy, appeared before Argentan. The very day after his arrival, on 8th October, the French garrison, without striking a blow, made terms for surrender, and the people from all the countryside around came flocking in to tender their obedience to the royal commissioners. From Argentan Henry went on to Seez, where there was "a fair

* *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 162.

minster that yielded anon unto the King." With the main division of his army he next advanced against Alençon, whilst the left wing, operating to the east under the command of Sir John Tiptoft, captured in succession Exmes, L'Aigle, Rugles, and Verneuil. * Alençon was a strong town with a fine castle, and was at first stoutly defended. But when the garrison saw how easily the English were subduing all the villages and castles round about they opened negotiations with the King, and made the usual agreement to surrender if no help came within the appointed time. Henry entered Alençon on 24th October, and stayed there over a month, whilst he consolidated the conquests which he had made with such startling rapidity. His captains meantime carried the warfare into the heart of Maine, and received the submission of the whole country up to the very walls of Le Mans.

The ease with which Henry advanced so far was due to the discord of the French princes. The death of the Dauphin John, in April, 1417, had been a serious blow to Burgundy. Charles, the last of the old King's sons, who thus became heir to the throne, was a mere boy, but already married to Marie of Anjou, daughter of Louis, titular King of Sicily. The young prince was entirely under the influence of Armagnac, who, to make his own position more secure, expelled Queen Isabel, his most dangerous rival, from her husband's Court to a prison at Tours. Burgundy, the old intriguer, who,

* Hardy, *Rotuli Normanniæ;* Exmes 10th October, L'Aigle 12th October, Rugles 18th October.

whilst the Dauphin John still lived, had looked to the Court, veered round once more. Now he posed as the champion of the oppressed; in the early summer his agents were fomenting a revolt in Normandy, and at the very time when the English King was marching on Caen, Burgundy was preparing to besiege his Armagnac rivals at Paris. The civil strife lasted through the autumn. At the beginning of November, Burgundy surprised Tours and released Queen Isabel, who proclaimed herself regent for her husband, and became the bitterest enemy of her only surviving son. The two parties had but one thing in common; they were equally ready to make terms with the foreign invader, if thus they could gain some sufficient advantage over their domestic enemies. Even in Normandy itself the civil war continued; and whilst Henry was besieging the castle of Falaise, the Burgundians under Alain Blanchard were expelling the Armagnacs from Rouen.

Under such circumstances the task of an invader must needs have been simple. Henry made use of his opportunities with consummate skill, and quickly began to reap the fruits of his well-planned campaign. He had not been long at Alençon before John of Brittany, alarmed for the safety of his duchy, came to seek terms from the conqueror. On 16th November, a treaty was concluded by the Breton Duke, under which he secured a truce till the following Michaelmas. At the same time, as agent for Queen Yolande of Sicily, and with the assent of the French Court, he obtained like terms for the posses-

sions of her son Louis * in Maine and Anjou. Burgundy's selfishness had long since secured immunity for his own territories in Artois and Flanders. Finally, the Dauphin's government offered to treat, and at the end of November his envoys met the English representatives near Touques; but these last negotiations led to no results, for the French found Henry's demands exorbitant, and the English King was not disposed to yield. Henry was indeed ready to accept whatever he could obtain freely from any quarter, but he recognised that the time was not yet ripe for a general agreement. His rapid advance to Alençon had accomplished its immediate purpose. The concessions which it enabled him to extort secured him from the danger of attack. Further progress in that direction was, however, for the time imprudent, if not impossible. So at the end of November he turned back to complete his conquests in lower Normandy.

On 1st December, Henry with his main army arrived before Falaise. That town could not be reduced without a set siege, and the English had therefore been compelled to pass it by when advancing on Alençon. The fortifications were so strong as to put its capture by assault out of the question. Although it was already nearly midwinter the English commanders resolved to reduce the town by blockade. Henry, like a true general, ever mindful of his men, made provision for their comfort his first care. By his orders wooden huts were

* Louis, who was brother-in-law of the Dauphin, was married to Brittany's daughter.

built for their shelter, in such numbers that the English camp presented the appearance of a new town. To protect his lines against the enemy the King had deep trenches dug all round, and a strong palisade with a projecting *chevaux-de-frise* constructed. The commissariat was provided for with equal care, and the market in the English camp was soon so well served as to excite the reverse of consolation in the minds of the besieged.* Whilst an abundance of food and comfortable quarters enabled the English to defy the hardships of winter, the strictness of the blockade did its work fast amid the townsfolk. Within less than three weeks the citizens of Falaise, thinking that a quick surrender was preferable to the certain dangers and doubtful issue of a long siege, made agreement † to yield the town if no help came within fourteen days. But the Sire Oliver de Mauny, the commandant, believing that the castle was impregnable, would consent to no terms. So, though the citizens opened their gates on 2nd January, 1418, the soldiery held out in the castle even more stubbornly than before. The English on their part brought into action all the military skill of the time. On the one side, where the castle, perched on a rocky eminence, defied any direct attack, they kept up an incessant bombardment with their artillery. On the other side, towards the town, after long labour, they filled the moat with fascines until they could begin to undermine the very walls. Bit by bit the sappers gouged

* Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 129–30.

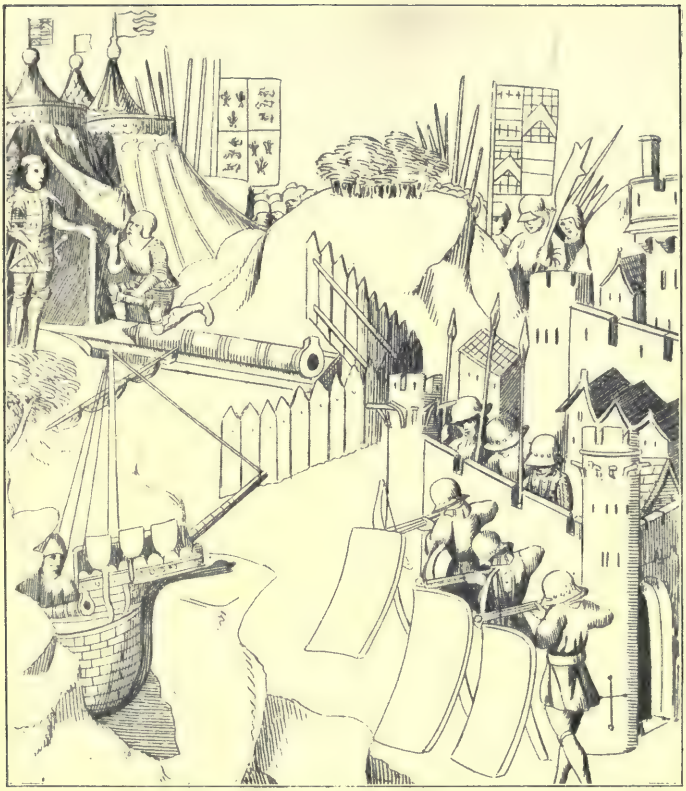
† On 20th December, 1417; Hardy, *Rotuli Normanniæ*, p. 312.

out the great stones from the foundations for a space of forty yards. The defenders tried in vain to drive them from their purpose by pouring molten pitch from the walls, and filling the moat with bundles of burning straw. Amidst all the toils of his men Henry was ever present directing and encouraging their efforts and deeming no matter too trivial for his personal attention. As the besieged found all their exertions fruitless their hopes gradually faded, until, on 2nd February, they made terms to surrender the castle after fourteen days. The garrison were allowed to depart under a safe-conduct, but without their arms or any other property. Oliver de Mauny alone, as a punishment for his stubborn rebellion, was excepted from these mild conditions, and kept in strict custody till he had defrayed at his own cost the expense of restoring the shattered castle which he had held so long.

Shortly after the surrender of the castle Henry left Falaise for Caen. During the next few months he devoted his own energies to the organisation of a government for his reconquered duchy. The great enterprise of the coming year must be the siege of Rouen. But before that could be attempted much else must be accomplished and many minor strongholds reduced. There was, however, nothing that called for the full force of the English army or required the King's personal direction. Central Normandy was now reduced; but the French still held out in the Cotentin, in the south-west towards the borders of Brittany, and to the east in the neighbourhood of Rouen. Three divisions

were therefore formed, under the Earl of Warwick, Humphrey of Gloucester, and Thomas of Clarence. Warwick was sent against the strong castle of Domfront, Gloucester was entrusted with the command in the Cotentin, and to Clarence was given the most difficult and important task of preparing the way for an advance on Rouen. These dispositions must have been made before Henry left Falaise, and his captains lost no time in taking up their respective commands. Sir John Cornwall, as lieutenant for Clarence, captured Chambrois, La Riviére de Tibouville and Harcourt early in March. In the west, Humphrey of Gloucester and his subordinates rapidly overran the greater part of the Cotentin. Sir John Robsart took Vire on 21st February, and Carentan and St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte in the latter part of March. St. Lo surrendered to Sir Walter Hungerford on 12th March, and Coutances to the Earl of Huntingdon four days later. By the 1st April Gloucester had appeared before Cherbourg; but that town defied his efforts nearly six months. Warwick met with a similarly stubborn resistance at Domfront, which only yielded after a three months' siege on 22nd July.

Henry himself, after spending ten days at Caen, removed to Bayeux, where he remained till the middle of April. The operations in the Cotentin were for the moment of the greater importance, and it is not unlikely that Henry desired to be near at hand until the success of Humphrey of Gloucester was assured. The direction of affairs farther east could be left more safely to the skill and energy of



THE SIEGE OF DOMFRONT.

Clarence. When all chance of danger was past the King returned to Caen, where he held the feast of St. George, on 23rd April, with great splendour, and admitted Sir John Robsart, Hugh Stafford (Lord Bourchier), Sir William Phillip, and Sir John Grey to be Knights of the Garter.* At Caen he remained for six weeks until the preparations for an advance on Rouen were complete.

The three months which Henry thus spent at Bayeux and Caen were devoted chiefly to the task of civil administration. Captains or Seneschals had been appointed to the command of each fortress or town on its surrender. But the military government thus established was only a temporary expedient. Henry, starting from the principle that he came to Normandy not as a conqueror but to recover his rightful heritage, endeavoured to disturb existing machinery as little as possible. In his proclamations he appealed to the ancient customs and laws of the Duchy. He claimed at once to be the heir of the old Dukes of the line of the Conqueror, and the true representative of St. Louis. He would restore their good laws, and the evil customs which sprang from the Valois usurpation he would sweep away. His anxiety to find a legal basis for his government produced in some aspects a curious and possibly a conscious analogy to the policy of his ancestor the Conqueror in England. The formula by which Henry confirmed those franchises and liberties that existed "before the time of

* At the same time he knighted fifteen gentlemen of his household, including Sir Lewis Robsart, son of Sir John.

Philip of Valois, adversary of the ancestors of the King," has its parallel in the Domesday formula which, disregarding Harold's usurpation, referred to "the day that King Edward was alive and was dead." A similar parallel comes out in the grant of Norman titles* and estates to English nobles. Like the Conqueror, Henry also took advantage of the feudal right of the sovereign to dispose of widows and heiresses in marriage. So again his grants were not based on any arbitrary confiscation, and covered only such property as came into the King's hands through the emigration or technical rebellion of the ancient owners. But as a rule they had this peculiarity, that they were for life only.† From one point of view this was a fatal defect, since the English lords had no sufficient motive to cherish their new possessions. The consequent neglect increased the impoverishment by war, which even in 1419 made Gilbert Umfraville complain that his Norman estates were a burden and no advantage. Such a system put any permanent settlement out of the

* Henry created six Norman earldoms, viz. : Harcourt for Thomas Beaufort, Tankerville for Sir John Grey, Perche for the Earl of Salisbury, Eu for Sir William Bourchier, Longueville for Gaston de Foix, and Ivry for Arthur de Richemont. Warwick's Earldom of Aumale was perhaps a seventh. Tankerville alone is still represented in the English peerage ; the title having been revived for the descendants of Grey's brother Thomas. Amongst lesser titles may be instanced the Viscounties of Auge, Orbec, and Pontaudemer held by Clarence, and the lordships of Hambye and Briquebec held by Suffolk. The occasional grant of French titles was continued under Henry VI.

† After the fatal day of Baugé, one of Henry's first acts was to take into his hands all the lordships in Normandy, which had belonged to English nobles who fell in the battle.

question. Henry cannot have been blind to the probable consequences of his policy; it is fair to assume that he intended deliberately to abstain from Anglicising his conquests, and desired to rule as lawfully in France as in England.

Henry could not, however, carry out in perfection the ideal which he thus set before himself. Hardly any Normans of rank or importance accepted his authority. The chief posts were therefore of necessity given to English officials, by whom the administration was conducted through native subordinates. Immediately after his second landing Henry restored the yearly *Rotulus Normanniæ*, or record of the official acts of the Duchy as it had been kept in the days of King John. The formal constitution of a government with Exchequer and Chancery on the old model came later. By 1st November, when Henry was at Alençon, the work of conquest was so far advanced that the appointment of a Treasurer-General for the Duchy seemed desirable. For this post an official of proved experience was found in Sir John Tiptoft, who had powers to organise the Exchequer, and to appoint and remove Bailiffs, Viscounts, Verderers, Farmers, and other officers.* The Chancery was not established till nearly six months later, when on 8th April, 1418, Philip Morgan was entrusted with the great seal of the Duchy.† The office of Seneschal of Normandy, as

* *Fœdera*, ix., 507. A copy of the *Ordinances observed in the King's Exchequer* was sent from England to Caen, in November, 1418. Devon, *Issues of Exchequer*, p. 357.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 571. The record is in the regular English form.

it existed under the Plantagenet Dukes, was also revived in favour of Hugh Luttrell. At the head of the military government was the "Lieutenant and Warden of the Lands and Marches of Normandy," a post which was held successively by the Earls of March and Salisbury.* The safe custody of the sea-coasts was provided for by the appointment of the young Earl of Suffolk to be Admiral of Normandy, on 19th May, 1419.†

Henry's care for the government of Normandy did not end with the formal constitution of an official hierarchy. We have already noticed the measures which he adopted to reconcile the inhabitants of Normandy to his rule. The mass of the people, the peasantry and the lesser burgesses, had no choice but to bow to the storm. In the first instance, at all events, the majority of these classes did so with no great reluctance. So far as they were concerned, the weakness and oppression of the French Government had killed any sentiment of patriotism. A change of masters could not be for the worse; it might be for the better. With the lower orders went their natural leaders, the parochial clergy.‡ The abbeys and great ecclesiastical corporations had too much at stake not to adopt the

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* *Fœdera*, ix., 592, 739; March was Lieutenant from 2nd June, 1418, to 26th April, 1419.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 753.

‡ On 17th September, 1417, ninety-one minor clergy of the district had letters of protection at Caen (*Fœdera*, ix., 488–489). On 22nd January, 1419, after the fall of Rouen, 132 parish priests with their parishioners made their submission (*id.*, ix., 672.)

same course. Moreover, Henry was very strict in enforcing respect for all "religious" and their property. Any disobedience to his orders was sternly punished, and the sincerity of his intentions was so manifest that many laymen took advantage to shave their heads and assume a clerical garb. Still good order was not maintained without difficulty, and an English soldier, writing home, complains naïvely that "he could get no pay, and was not allowed to forage."* Some disorder was no doubt unavoidable. The evil was increased by the conduct of the Normans, who would not submit and, being unable to flee, took refuge in the woods and carried on a guerilla warfare. These "brigands" were causing Henry anxiety so early as the spring of 1418, when strong measures were enforced to hunt them down, and all peaceable citizens were ordered to be in their houses by nine o'clock.† It is to the credit of Henry's government that the brigandage, though never entirely suppressed, did not during his lifetime attain such serious proportions as prevailed twenty years later.

Whilst the lower classes were reconciled more or less to English rule, Henry's overtures met with little response in the higher ranks of society. Even the more notable burgesses of the towns preferred exile to submission, and so late as 1423 some of the chief

* Collins, *Peerage*, viii., 107. Pillagers were tried by court-martial and if found guilty were sentenced to death; see *Fœdera*, ix., 551, for the case of two English squires, who were pardoned by the Kings' mercy (7th March, 1418).

† Hardy, *Rotuli Normanniæ*, pp. 242, 284.

citizens of Harfleur were still prisoners in England. Two thousand persons are said to have left Harfleur in 1415; and when Caen fell, two years afterwards, a thousand of the citizens took refuge at Falaise. The leaders, both in Church and State, held aloof. Of the episcopal cities of Normandy, Seez was the only one where the bishop was resident in 1418. Henry's close relations with the Papacy made severe measures impossible, and by a polite fiction the other bishops were supposed to be "on business in foreign parts."* Of the nobles and principal gentry in Normandy hardly any made terms with the conqueror.† Henry himself, writing to his Council in England in the autumn of 1418, complains that: "In substance there is no man of estate come in to the King's obeisance; the which is a thing that causeth the people to be full unstable, and is no wonder."‡ Wholesale confiscation of the estates of absentees had little effect; and though a few exiles came in to make their peace, more who had submitted in the first instance afterwards deserted. Henry in vain endeavoured to check emigration by the proffer, on 12th April, 1418, of favourable terms to all who tendered their submission by the 1st June next, with exceptions for those who were actually in

* "Episcopo in remotis agente" is the phrase. The Bishops of Bayeux, Coutances, and Evreux, were murdered at Paris as Armagnacs in 1418. Henry had these sees filled up soon afterwards. Cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 620, 622.

† On 28th March, 1419, confirmations of property were granted to forty Norman gentry; but out of these only seven were knights or widows of knights. *Fœdera*, ix., 714.

‡ Nicolas, *Proc. Privy Council*, ii., 350.

arms against him or who, having submitted, had broken their oaths.* As a further inducement to peace, an honest endeavour was made to redress grievances. In a proclamation, dated 4th May, 1418, after relating "how our adversaries in times past have oppressed our subjects with grievous taxes made worse by tyrannous magistrates, whereat is God our Creator wroth, as also should be any good and loyal Christian man," Henry remitted such taxes from 1st June, and reduced the duty on salt to half its former amount; further, since in times past the royal officers had often taken more than was due, such excess was strictly prohibited and the ancient usages and customs ordered to be observed.† The policy which this proclamation illustrates was enlightened. No ruler was ever more alive than was Henry to the importance of good order and justice for securing the good will of the governed. It was in the same spirit that measures were taken for the encouragement of commerce, for the repression of piracy, for the security of merchants travelling on land, and for the prevention of fraud by the better regulation of weights and measures.‡

To rule his new conquests lawfully and justly was the whole essence of Henry's domestic policy in France. Only at one point did he depart from this general principle. English influence must be secured in the chief ports of entry. This purpose was shown in the treatment of Harfleur§ in 1415, and the same

* *Fœdera*, ix., 573. † *Id.*, ix., 583–585.

‡ Puiseux, *L'Émigration Normande*, pp. 77–78; *Fœdera*, ix., 691.

§ *Cf.* p. 133, above.

policy was afterwards extended to Caen, Honfleur and Cherbourg. In these four ports municipalities, which followed avowedly English customs, were established on the model of Calais. But Henry's attempts at colonisation met with only very moderate success. In 1419 special inducements were still being offered to those English who would take up their residence at Harfleur, and the grants which till then had been for life only, were henceforward made in perpetuity. In spite of all the efforts of the home government, the English colonies never flourished, and severe penalties had to be imposed to prevent the re-migration of the discontented settlers. Even at Harfleur there were but four hundred English residents in 1435, and the condition of the other colonies was no better. For the time an outward show of permanence was fostered by the needs of the army of occupation, which drew its supplies from England. A few streets and places received English names, * and a few buildings, like the fine church at Caudebec, were erected. But except for the University of Caen the English occupation left no lasting traces of its existence.

Still with all its lack of permanence, Henry's rule in Normandy redounds to his credit. The enlightened policy which directed it owed its inspiration to him, and was perhaps too advanced for the time. Normandy was the one French conquest in which English authority was organised under Henry's personal direction. The comparative stability of the

*As "Humphrey Street" at Cherbourg, and the "Boulingrin" at Rouen.

system which he there established bears strong testimony to his political capacity. It is a faint indication of what he might have accomplished under more favourable conditions had his life been prolonged.



# CHAPTER XV

## THE SIEGE OF ROUEN

### 1418–1419

HENRY'S concern with political affairs had not prevented him from giving watchful care to the needs of the coming campaign. The losses of the war, and the garrisons required for so many castles and towns had been a serious drain on the forces which accompanied the King to France in August, 1417. The Earl of March and Thomas Beaufort, now Duke of Exeter, had been busy all the winter in England raising fresh troops for the royal service. In the spring of 1418 they both crossed over to France. March landed at La Hogue St. Vaast in April and, meeting with little opposition, joined the King at Caen. He and his men had been like to be drowned in a great water, but an Anthony pig * that had followed the host all the way, or more probably a countryman whom they took captive, brought them out safe. From Caen March was sent to assist Gloucester at the siege

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 7 ro. An Anthony pig was the smallest or favourite of the litter, so tame that it would follow people in the hope of food.

# THE VALLEY OF THE SEINE

to illustrate

# THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1418 — 1420.




SCALE OF ENGLISH MILES

0 5 10 20 30

of Cherbourg. Shortly afterwards, in May, Exeter arrived with 1500 men and, by the King's orders, went out to besiege Evreux.

Meantime Clarence and his lieutenants were making good progress. Lisieux and Nully L'Evesque were taken in April; the abbey of Bec Hellouin offered a longer resistance, but yielded to the Duke on 4th May. A fortnight later Evreux surrendered to Exeter. These were all steps on the way to Rouen. The plan of the campaign was to advance down the valley of the Iton and so strike the Seine at Pont de l'Arche some twenty miles * above the city, where the river might be crossed and the communications of Rouen with Paris severed.

At the end of May, Henry left Caen and joined Clarence at Bernay. Thence after a few days he advanced to Louviers. That town held out for a fortnight, but on 23rd June yielded to the King. Without delay the English marched on to Pont de l'Arche and began their siege on 27th June. The chief part of the town lay on the far side of the river, but the end of the bridge on the left bank was protected by a strong tower, which could not be attacked with any prospect of success whilst the town was unassailed. Nevertheless, Sir John Cornwall was sent with a formal demand for its surrender, which the French Captain, the Sire de Graville, naturally refused. Whereupon Cornwall made him a chivalrous wager: "Graville, I pledge you on my honour that to-morrow in spite of you and your men, I will cross the water of Seine. If I cross it,

* About half that distance by road.

you shall give me the best charger that you have; and if I cross it not, I will give you my helm of steel which I value at 500 nobles." *

To cross the Seine in the face of a powerful enemy was no easy task. The river could not be forded, and the few boats that could be found were water-logged and useless. Still, such as they were, these boats were hastily patched up, and pontoons constructed of hides stretched on wicker frames.† The attempt was to be made at night, simultaneously in two different quarters; the one under the direction of the King, the other under Clarence. For their further assistance in this dangerous enterprise a number of good swimmers were told off to go to a place three miles distant. These last were not to cross over, but plunging into the river were to splash about and make all the noise they could to distract the attention of the enemy. The French, who knew that an attack was intended, were spread out all along the north bank of the river. Cornwall with sixty companions crossed in eight little boats to an island in midstream, whence with some small cannon he opened fire on the enemy. Under cover of Cornwall's artillery one party after another passed over unharmed. The French, distracted by the darkness and the confusion of so many attacks, offered no good resistance, and without more ado their horse took to flight before our infantry. ‡

* Monstrelet, p. 438.

† These had apparently been prepared beforehand for use in such an emergency.

‡ Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 170–174; Monstrelet, p. 438.

"Thus upon Monday, the 4th day of the month of July," wrote Henry to the Mayor of London, "we got upon our enemies the passage over the river; and God of His mercy showed so for us and for our right, that it was without the death of any man's person of ours, albeit that our enemy with great power assembled nigh the same river for to have let and defended us the same passage." *

When the English had secured their position on the right bank, a pontoon bridge was made, by means of which the remainder of the army crossed over. The French in Pont de l'Arche held out tamely for a while, and on 23rd July surrendered the town. Cornwall told the Sire de Graville that he had acquitted himself ill. "Had I been in your place with my sixty English I would have kept the passage against the power of the kings of France and England." He had won his wager. We are not told whether it was paid.†

The road to Rouen now lay open. Still Henry tarried a while at Pont de l'Arche. The siege would tax his power to the utmost and he wished so far as possible to concentrate all his forces. Avranches had yielded to Huntingdon on 14th July, and Domfront was under agreement to surrender to Warwick. Within a few days the two Earls might be expected to join the King. Nor was there any reason for haste. The French at Rouen had long expected an attack and were fully prepared. More

* Delpit, p. 222.

† Monstrelet, *u. s.*, expressly says the crossing was on the night after the challenge.

than a year previously Armagnac had ordered the city to be put in a state of thorough defence. Since that time Rouen under the leadership of Alain Blanchard had turned Burgundian. But though the democratic faction favoured the Duke's domestic policy, it had no sympathy with his tortuous diplomacy. Under her new governors Rouen remained resolutely patriotic. The fortifications of the city had been recently repaired. During the spring of 1418 the walls were raised, and strengthened on the inner side by an embankment of earth so broad that a cart might be driven along it. Outside, the foss had been deepened and the approaches protected by masked pitfalls and *chevaux-de-frise*. The rich suburbs, which spread beyond the walls on every side, were utterly destroyed; their gardens were laid waste and the trees and hedges burnt until the country all about was "as bare as your hand."* Along the walls and at every gate there was a plentiful array of artillery large and small. The garrison had been lately reinforced. Burgundy had sent 4000 men-at-arms, and the Parisians 600 of their own troops; with the city militia there was an ample force to hold the walls. The Governor was Guy le Bouteiller, a Norman gentleman whose birth made him acceptable to the people. Under him were several well-tried soldiers, though none of great distinction. The real heroes of the siege were Alain Blanchard, the democratic leader, who was captain of the crossbowmen, and Robert de Livet, Canon of Rouen and vicar-general for the absent Archbishop.

*Page, *Siege of Rouen*, p. 4.

Nor must we forget Jean Jourdain, the commander of the artillery, and "Graunt Jakys," * a Lombard *condottiere*, "capitayne of all men of warree, and governor outward both of horseback and of foote," who took the command in every sortie. †

If Rouen was better prepared for defence than Caen and other cities of Normandy, she owed it chiefly to the energy of her own citizens. Neither of the two contending parties in the State gave her much thought in the hour of her need. Never even in France did civil strife rage more fiercely than during the early summer of 1418. At the beginning of the year Armagnac and the Dauphin held Paris in the name of the King. But the democracy of the capital had never loved Count Bernard, and the violence of his Gascon mercenaries kindled their hatred anew. On the night of 29th May a traitor opened the gates to the Sire de l'Isle Adam, who was captain for Duke John at Pontoise. The townsmen rose in arms to greet him, and the streets re-echoed with the shout, "*Vive Bourgogne!*" The Armagnacs were taken completely by surprise. Tanneguy du Chatel, the provost, hurried the Dauphin to safety in the Bastille. Count Bernard escaped for the moment into hiding, but his chief supporters were taken prisoners and thrown into the Conciergerie. After a vain attempt to recover the city Tanneguy withdrew with his young charge to Melun. Disorder reigned supreme and day by day the terror grew worse. At last on 12th June the Paris mob

* "Grand Jacques."

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 9 ro.

burst forth in one of its wildest fits of passion. They broke open the Conciergerie, and slew all the prisoners, including five bishops. The hated Armagnacs and their hired soldiery were massacred without mercy. Count Bernard was found in his hiding-place, murdered, and his dead body, scored with the red cross of Burgundy, dragged naked through the streets. A month later the Duke and Queen Isabel entered Paris in triumph. John made a show of authority by hanging a few of the worst rioters; as a sort of compensation he beheaded several Armagnacs. The fruits of the revolution he accepted without compunction.

Henry at Pont de l'Arche was doubtful whether he would now find in Burgundy a friend or foe. He sent a pursuivant to inquire; in reply he learnt that the Duke "casted to give him battle, and so we hold him our full enemy." * Then the King determined to take advantage of French disunion, and to begin the siege of Rouen before the new harvest could be gathered in.

As a preliminary to his own advance Henry despatched the Duke of Exeter to reconnoitre the city. Exeter displayed his banner before the gates and sent a herald to demand surrender. The men of the city made scornful gestures, and "gave no answer but their guns." Presently there sallied out a strong force of horse and foot, whom our men "met with and overthrew an heap of them, and the remnant fled again into the town." † When he had completed

* Delpit, p. 222.

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 7.

his reconnaissance Exeter rode quietly back to Pont de l'Arche, and reported to Henry how the ground lay.

On the Friday before Lammas Day (29th July) the English army set out from Pont de l'Arche, and arrived before Rouen that same evening. There was a little skirmishing with the garrison; but the forethought with which Henry had secured accurate intelligence enabled his troops to take up their positions without serious disturbance.

The fortifications of Rouen formed an irregular quadrangle, the lines of which are still marked by the modern boulevards. The southern wall ran along the Seine, and the bridge which connected the city with the left bank of the river was protected at the far end by a strong fortress called La Barbacane. On the landward sides there were five principal gates—the Porte Martinville, the Porte St. Hilaire, the Porte Beauvoisine, the Porte de Bouvreuil, and the Porte Cauchoise. Each of these gates was strongly defended, and the intervening spaces of the walls were guarded by more than sixty towers. In the north-west corner above the Porte Bouvreuil towered the Castle or Citadel. To the south-east, on a precipitous hill at a little distance from the walls, was the fortified Abbey of St. Catherine, on the river side of which lay the small fort of St. Michel.

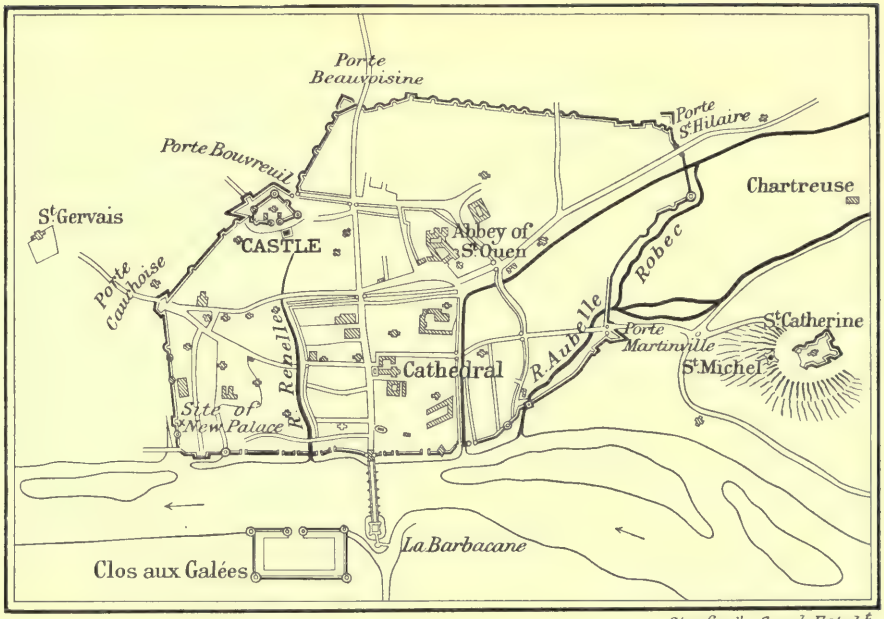
Henry established his own headquarters at the Charterhouse of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Rose. This was in a secure position a little north of St. Catherine's and about a mile distant from the walls. Clarence

lay on the far side of the city, in the waste abbey of St. Gervais, before the Porte Cauchoise. The Earl Marshal had his ward before the Castle, and Exeter kept watch at the Porte Beauvoisine, whilst Sir William Porter had guard of the Porte St. Hilaire. On the King's left lay his cousin, Edmund Beaufort, between St. Catherine's and the city. The siege of St. Catherine's was entrusted to the Earl of Salisbury, under whom Sir John Grey held watch before St. Michel. On the river side of the abbey Sir Philip Leche, the King's Treasurer, "kept the ward under the hill." Next to him were Sir Thomas Carew, "that baron bolde," and Janico d'Artas the Squire,* "and these two kept manly the water of Seine, and fought with their enemy ofttimes." The Earl of Huntingdon had charge of the south side of the river before La Barbacane and the bridge; with him for his chief lieutenants were Sir Gilbert Umfraville and "Master Neville, the Earl's son of Westmoreland."

The fortifications of Rouen were so strong that Henry abstained wisely from any attempt at assault. He could not post his great guns to advantage, as he had done at Harfleur and Caen, nor indeed bring them near enough to the walls to make an effective bombardment possible. From the first, therefore, it was intended to starve the city into surrender. That, however, was impossible whilst the French held command of the Seine. All the boats on the river had been collected and brought to Rouen, where there was a numerous flotilla in the "*Clos aux*

* A Gascon gentleman who had been in the service of Richard II.

PLAN OF ROUEN.
1418 – 1419.



*Galées*," or fortified harbour of the city. On the other hand, the English fleet could not come up the Seine whilst the French held the town of Caudebec, between Rouen and the sea. As soon, therefore, as Warwick arrived from Domfront, he was sent to lay siege to Caudebec.

Above Rouen, in order to secure his communications with the Earl of Huntingdon and with lower Normandy, Henry built a bridge about three miles from the city.* This was not a hastily made pontoon bridge, like that at Pont de l'Arche, but a stout wooden structure, supported on great piles driven into the bed of the river, by which men and horses and "all other carriage" might readily pass. In spite of constant attacks by the French flotilla, this Bridge of St. George was successfully completed. For its protection, and to block the passage of the French vessels, three great iron chains were stretched across the river just beyond cannon-shot from the walls; the lowest chain was a foot and a half below the surface of the water, and the highest two feet above.

On the landward side, Henry made his camp secure from attack by regularly fortified lines. Deep trenches were dug and the earth thrown up from them formed into an embankment, which was topped with a thorn hedge. In front of the trenches, towards the city, were set rows of sharp stakes as a protection against the French cavalry. The engineer, who designed all these works and, presumably, the Bridge of St. George also, was Sir Robert Babthorp, the King's Controller.

* Between Lescure and Sotteville.—Cochon, *Chron. Norm.*, p. 381.

Henry's engineers did not accomplish their task without difficulty. There was scarcely a day or hour when the garrison did not make a sortie. The defenders of Rouen included "many a manful man of his body and hands. And so they proved them when they issued out of the city, both on horseback and on foot. For they came never at one gate out alone, but at three or four gates, and at every gate two or three thousand of good men's bodies armed. And they manfully countered with our Englishmen, and much people were slain divers times with guns, quarrells and other ordnance." *

Henry, always careful of his resources, contented himself with repelling the attacks of the enemy, and with taking such precautions as should make them as futile as possible. Against St. Catherine's alone did he assume the offensive. In the early days of the siege communications were still maintained between the abbey and the city. After a little, the English, under cover of a dark night, contrived to occupy the open space immediately before the Porte Martinville. The attack on St. Catherine's was then prosecuted vigorously under the direction of the Earl of Salisbury. Towards the end of August a night assault was attempted, but some chance sound alarmed the garrison, who repulsed the English with heavy loss. However, the defenders were themselves at their wits' end, and a few days later, on 2nd September, were forced to surrender.

Meantime Warwick had held his siege with vigour before Caudebec. To capture the town whilst the

**English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 9ro.

French still had the mastery on the Seine was no easy matter. But after a month's siege, the garrison offered terms, and on 9th September a composition was made. Caudebec was to abide by the fate of its mother-city of Rouen, and in the meantime the English ships were to have free passage up the Seine. The English navy, which was blockading the mouth of the river, had been reinforced by a fleet which Henry's kinsman, King John of Portugal, had sent to his assistance under John Velasquez d'Almada. At the beginning of September the joint squadrons had reduced Quillebœuf. Now that Caudebec made terms they sailed right up the Seine as far as Deville, but they could not pass the bridge at Rouen. Nothing daunted Henry; by some means his vessels must gain access to the upper Seine. The course of the river is very winding, and at a little distance from Rouen between Moulineaux and Orival the upper and lower waters are less than three miles apart. Across this isthmus the English hauled a number of their vessels, and launched them again on the river above Rouen. Then the besiegers gained the mastery on the Seine and drove the French ships to take refuge in the arsenal, where the captains of Rouen had them burnt, lest they might fall into the enemy's hands.

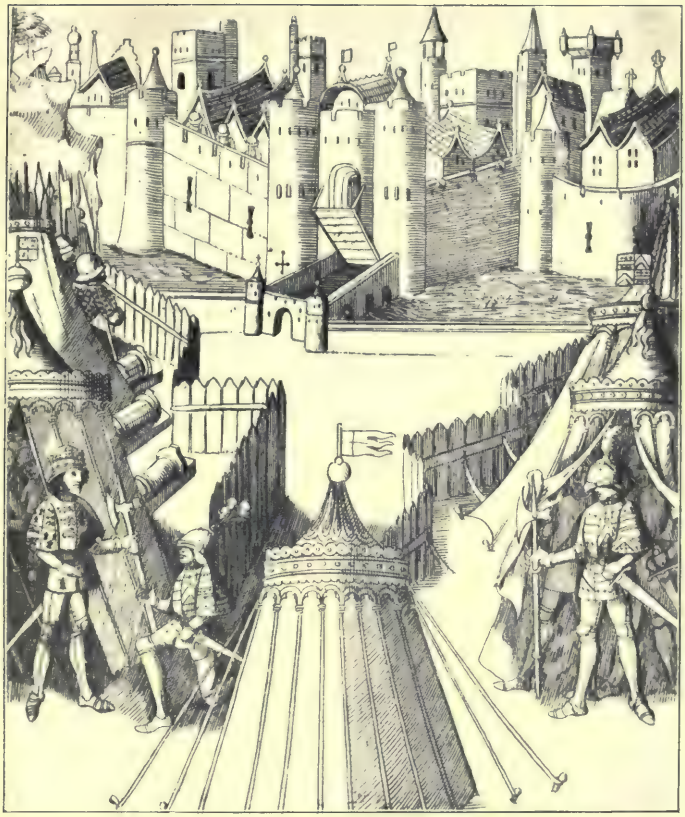
Now that the fleet held the Seine provisions came freely to the besiegers' camp from England. On the 10th August Henry had written to the mayor and aldermen of London praying them effectually "that in all the haste that ye may ye will do arm as many small vessels as ye may, goodly with victuals and

namely with drink." What "in getting and enarming vessels, doing brew both ale and beer, purveying wine and other victuals," with the best diligence and care no little time was spent. So it was 8th September before the Londoners despatched their convoy with a prayer that the King would accept it "not having regard to the littlehood or small value of the gift itself, which is simple, but to the good will that the poor givers thereof have to the good speed and welfare of your most sovereign and excellent person." *

Welcome reinforcements also began to arrive. After the composition of Caudebec Warwick rejoined the main army and took his post before the Porte Martinville. About the end of September Cherbourg at last surrendered, and Gloucester brought his troops to Rouen, where he was given the chief command at the Porte St. Hilaire. From Ireland Sir Thomas Butler, the Prior of Kilmainham, came over with a large force of his countrymen.† There were several hundred of them, scantily clad and armed after the manner of their nation with targes, javelins, and great knives of a strange fashion. Most of them went on foot; others rode bareback on their little mountain ponies with panniers like a country corn-chandler. These Irish were not much use for fight-

* Delpit, pp. 224–225. The Londoners sent 30 butts of sweet wine (10 of Tyre, 10 of Romeney, and 10 of Malvesey) and 1000 pipes of ale and beer with 2500 cups.

† Monstrelet, p. 441, says 8000; and Page, *Siege of Rouen*, p. 12, says 1500. But we find that the Prior shipped from Waterford in Bristol vessels with 200 horse and 300 foot (Devon, *Issues of Exchequer*, p. 351). See also Cochon, p. 377.



THE SIEGE OF ROUEN.

ing, but were famous foragers, who ravaged the country far and wide, and rode away on the captured cattle with their other booty slung before them. They did so much mischief that Henry had at last to interfere, and issue strict orders for their better governance. *

Within the city provisions grew scarce. Ceres and Bacchus, says the grandiloquent chronicler, fled in terror to the English camp, whilst pale Famine entered in to take their place. Yet for all the "sorrow and hunger strong," the gallant garrison still held so stout a show on the walls that the English had no knowledge of their straits.† About the end of October an old priest contrived to pass through the English lines and bear a message from Rouen to the government at Paris. ‡ There he hired a famous Norman doctor of the university, Eustace de Pavilly, to plead his cause. The orator delivered a fine speech to Burgundy and the Court on the text, "Lord, what shall we do?" When Eustace had made an end, the old priest spoke in more homely fashion: "My lord the King, I am bidden by the people of Rouen, to make before you, and before you my lord of Burgundy, their great cry for the oppression which they suffer at the hands of the English. And they would have you know by my mouth, that if for default of succour it should happen that they become the subjects of the King of England, you shall not find in

* *Rotuli Normanniæ*, ap. *Gesta*, p. 125, n.

† Page, *Siege of Rouen*, pp. 19–20.

‡ The old priest was at Paris 27th Oct. Cf. *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 300.

all the world worse enemies than them, and they will destroy you and your generation." For all his blunt speech the Duke heard him graciously, and promised in reply that he would make provision very shortly to relieve the beleaguered city.*

With these tidings the old priest returned to Rouen, where the bells that had been so long silent rang out in a shrill peal of joy at the news. Henry also learnt of what was intended, and at once took measures to meet it. Entrenchments were thrown up to protect his camp on the outside, the guns were put in position all ready bent, and the Prior of Kilmainham with his wild Irishmen was lodged in the Forest of Lyons, by which quarter the relieving force was most likely to come.

Such precautions were no more than prudence required. But Henry must have known full well what little likelihood there was that the French would take the field. France was paralysed by the discord of her would-be rulers. The Dauphin with his Court was at Poitiers. His new advisers, chief of whom were Tanneguy du Chatel and Louvet, a lawyer, had only one thought, vengeance on Burgundy. His followers, instead of turning their arms against the foreign enemy, pillaged and plundered their own country up to the very walls of Paris. That summer the merchants dared not travel without a guard of soldiers, and the peasants left their harvest to rot ungathered in the fields. Burgundy lay inactive at the capital, where his habitual indecision was reinforced by lack of men and money. It was in vain

* Monstrelet, pp. 444–445.

that the Duke of Brittany endeavoured to negotiate an agreement between the two parties. Neither faction would give way. Each was ready to bargain with the English for help against their domestic enemies. However, the appeal from Rouen moved Burgundy to some show of activity. On 10th November he took down the "Oriflamme" from St. Denis and marched out with his troops to Pontoise. There he remained five weeks, till the whole neighbourhood was impoverished by the needs of his army. Then he withdrew to Beauvais, pretending that he could not face the English without the Dauphin's assistance. To Rouen instead of an army he sent an embassy.

Henry had been somewhat disturbed by Brittany's project for reunion. He met it with an astute diplomacy, which kept the French divided whilst Rouen perished. He accepted the overtures of Burgundy, though he had already opened negotiations with the Dauphin. Probably the King expected no more than to play off his antagonists one against the other, and thus to widen the breach between them. Nevertheless he would have made terms with either party if they would agree to what he desired.

In an able document addressed to his Council in England Henry set forth the considerations which inclined him to treat with the Dauphin. It seemed doubtful whether Burgundy in his present position would agree to a peace. The King began to feel uneasy at the prospect of having to "continue forth his war to the whole conquest of the realm of

France." Yet even that were not more expensive than to keep what he had in Normandy by force of arms. His soldiers must be paid, lest by living at free quarters they should make the people of the province, who were already overcharged, his enemies. The renunciation of the King's rights was not to be thought of, but it was possible that the Dauphin might agree to a truce, as the price for Henry's aid against Burgundy. The news of such a truce might bring the Duke to offer terms in his turn, and how would matters then stand? If Burgundy offered him homage (as King of France) could he refuse him? If it came to war how would this affect the existing truce with Flanders for merchants, clerks, pilgrims, and fishers? It was to be considered also what power the Dauphin had to treat, since he was not King, and his acts might be reputed invalid.*

The instructions which Henry gave to his representatives were framed accordingly. The proposals from the Dauphin's advisers had been received early in October,† and on the 26th of that month Henry named his ambassadors, chief of whom were the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury. They were to drive the other party, by all motives and reasons they could, to show their hand. If so be the Dauphin's representatives offered anything that "the King hath now in his hands, be it said to them, that the proffer is void." If the other party could not be driven to a reasonable proffer, then might they ask in their

* Nicolas, *Proc. Privy Council*, ii., 350–358.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 624.

master's behalf for Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Flanders, in full sovereignty, over and above what he held already.* The practical gist of the instructions was that the ambassadors should press the Dauphin in all ways possible, and perpetually lure him on by the prospect of an alliance against Burgundy. The conference assembled at Alençon on 10th November. The French would not be driven so far as the English desired. The negotiations were spun out for fifteen days and ended pretty much as Henry expected. The English ambassadors concluded with a solemn protestation of their master's good intent and a plain hint that they doubted the other party's competency to treat.†

The announcement that the Dauphin was in treaty had, as Henry anticipated, brought an offer from Burgundy. A conference was arranged for early in November,‡ but Burgundy's envoys only reached Pont de l'Arche on 1st December. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Warwick were again Henry's chief representatives. The French ambassadors were accompanied by the Cardinal Orsini, who had been some months in France endeavouring by Pope Martin's wish to arrange peace. They had special powers to treat for a marriage with Catherine of France, and had brought her portrait for Henry's inspection. The conference ran much the same

* *Fœdera*, ix., 628–631.

† *Id.*, ix., 632–645, Acts of the Conference; see also 646–652.

‡ *Id.*, ix., 631–632; the faithless Burgundy was already in treaty with Henry on 26th October, the day before his promise to Rouen.

course as that at Alençon. The English demands were thought exorbitant, and, after a fortnight's discussion, negotiations were broken off. Henry's representatives made a protestation as before, declaring that Charles VI. was not in a fit state to treat, and that Burgundy had not the right.*

Theoretically the negotiations at Alençon and Pont de l'Arche were fruitless. Yet the six weeks that had been spent on them were not, from the English point of view, wasted. Henry had gained what he most desired. The two French factions watched one another with increasing suspicion. Long-drawn delay and hope deferred drove the defenders of Rouen to despair.

A four-months' siege had brought the citizens wellnigh to the end of their resources. They had only bran for bread, and no meat but horseflesh. The starving people were fain to eat dogs and cats, rats, mice, and the very grass that grew by the roadside. The rulers of the city in their extremity expelled from the gates twelve thousand useless mouths, old men, women, and children.† It was a stern necessity, but Henry could not let the poor wretches pass through his lines; by his orders they were driven back beneath the walls, where they lay and perished of hunger and cold in the ditch. Still, for pity's sake, he suffered his men to give them of

* *Fœdera*, ix., 654–659; *cf.* 788. The French insisted that all business should be in their own language, of which the English were ignorant. Monstrelet, p. 445.

† Not, we may fairly conjecture, their own townsfolk, but refugees from other places; among them the "Cannys," who thrice in twelve months, at Caen, Falaise, and Rouen, endured the horrors of a siege.

their own bread, and when Christmas came he sent his heralds to ask a truce; upon that day at all events the poor folk should eat and drink at his cost. And they thanked Heaven for the tender hearts of the English, who had more compassion upon them than had those of their own nation.

When the governors of Rouen perceived that in spite of Burgundy's promises no help came to them, they contrived once again to send to Beauvais messengers, who addressed the King and his Court in these terms: "The good people of Rouen have already several times informed you of the great necessity and distress that they suffer for your sake; yet have you provided nothing of what you did promise. Now for this last time have they sent us to say that if help comes not within a few days, they will render themselves unto the King of England. If you fail them, they renounce the faith, loyalty and obedience which they owe to you." Burgundy dared not refuse their appeal. He made answer for the King, that though he had the good will, he had not yet the power to raise the siege; still by God's grace he would without fail succour them by the fourth day after Christmas.

The appointed day came and went without any sign of rescue. Then the garrison abandoned hope, and determined to treat. Late on New Year's Eve some French knights came out of La Barbacane and asked for a parley. Gilbert Umfraville, who was in command of the outposts, made answer. When the French learnt his name they thanked God, since the old blood of Normandy would help them to a good

end. "We have been," they said, "to every gate of the city, where the princes lodge before, and have called after speech of them but could have no answer." Now they desired Umfraville to obtain for them from the King a safe-conduct for twelve envoys. In the morning Umfraville reported the matter to Henry, who, as it was then Sunday, fixed the interview for the morrow.

On the following day, Umfraville met the envoys at the Porte St. Hilaire; four knights, four clerks, and four burgesses, whom he escorted to the Charterhouse. When they arrived the King was hearing mass, and the envoys waited in the hall. Presently Henry came out from his closet with his lords and councillors. His serene and stately bearing gave the anxious messengers no sign of what they might hope or fear. Humbly the French knelt before him and presented a bill or memorial, which Henry with a whispered direction handed to the Duke of Exeter. Then the King bade them speak. They began with an appeal to his pity for the poor folk in the ditch. Henry stood still for a few moments in solemn silence, then said severely: "Fellows! who put them there? It was not I as ye know well. As for yourselves it is my own city and heritage that you hold against me." The envoys made answer with deference that they were the sworn lieges of King Charles, and had a charge from the Duke of Burgundy; might some of them go to seek release from their pledge? Henry's reply was plain and to the point: Their French liege and the Duke knew well that he held his siege before Rouen, and there

had ofttimes been messengers between them; to send a fresh message now "were to them no novelty, to us but superfluity." Rouen must be surrendered without subterfuge, but for the reverence of God and the Virgin he would grant them space to treat as to terms. Therewith the envoys withdrew; and returned to the city, much impressed, as they told Umfraville by the way, with the passing princehood of the King.

Early next morning two tents were pitched before the Porte St. Hilaire, one for the English, the other for the French representatives. Henry's commissioners were the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury, the Lord FitzHugh, Sir Walter Hungerford, Sir Gilbert Umfraville, Sir John Robsart, and Dom John Velasquez d'Almada. It was a brave spectacle; the gay pavilions, the throng of anxious citizens on the walls, the dense mass of English soldiery on the plain below, the knights and nobles, the heralds and pursuivants, who in their gorgeous coats went constantly backwards and forwards.* A piteous contrast was that other sight in the ditch hard by, where the poor folk with scarce a rag to cover them lay perishing on the damp ground; there might you see women with their dead babes in their arms, and little children begging by the side of their dead parents. Upon two such sights, as far apart as heaven and hell, that one of weal and that other of woe, no man could look with heart unmoved.

* "The Englysche beste, the Fraynysche floure,
Of Portynggale castelle and toure."
Page, *Siege of Rouen*, p. 34.

The conference lasted three days, but the two parties could come to no agreement. "We asked much and they proffered small." Henry's terms were absolute; the garrison must yield themselves to his will. To this the French would not consent, and at the end of the third day their envoys returned sorrowful to the city. Accounts differ as to the mood in which the news that the treaty was broken was received in Rouen. If we might believe the French writers, the whole population united in a heroic resolve; they would throw down their walls for a great space, fire their city behind them, and sally forth through the breach in a body. The English authorities, on the other hand, declare that the lower people rose against their governors, and insisted that by surrender an end should be put to their sufferings. Both accounts agree that negotiations were resumed through the intervention of Archbishop Chichele, who mediated with the Norman clergy. The second conference lasted four days, from the 10th to the 13th of January, when terms were at last agreed upon. The garrison was to be allowed to depart under a safe-conduct, but without their arms. The city was to pay a ransom of three hundred thousand crowns, but was guaranteed her ancient privileges. Nine persons * were, however, excepted by name; and all Normans who

* Chief of these were Alain Blanchard, who had hung English prisoners from the walls, and Robert de Livet, who had excommunicated the King. Blanchard was at once executed, and de Livet was kept for five years in an English prison. The other seven were allowed to purchase their freedom. Puiseux, *Siége de Rouen*, pp. 119, 202–205.

would not become Henry's lieges were to remain prisoners. The capitulation was to take effect on 19th January if no rescue came in the meantime.

The six days of grace were but a formal courtesy. On the appointed day Guy le Bouteiller with a company of the citizens brought the keys to the King. Henry named as governor of Rouen the Duke of Exeter, who at once took possession of the city. On the following morning Henry himself made his entry by the Porte Beauvoisine, in solemn procession, but without military display. Before him went a great company of priests and monks with three bishops at their head. The King himself rode a black horse, and wore a long gown of black damask, which was fastened across his breast with a golden clasp.* Behind him came a page bearing a fox's brush † at his spearhead. The bells of the city rang out in welcome, and the townsfolk greeted him with shouts of "Noel!" Henry went first to the Cathedral, where his chaplains met him chanting, "QUIS EST MAGNUS DOMINUS." Thence, after he had heard mass and made his offering, he rode away to take up his lodging in the Castle.‡

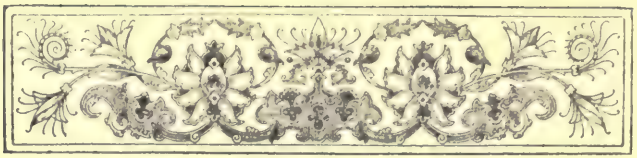
* "A paytrelle of golde fulle bryght,
Aboute hys breste hyt was pyght.
The pendauntys dyd by hym downe hange
On eyther syde of hys hors stronge."

Page, *Siege of Rouen*, p. 45.

There were several jewelled peitrels in Henry's wardrobe. A simple one of gold with two pendant chains was valued at £100 6*s.* 0*d.* A gown of black damask was valued at £4.—*Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 215, 235.

† This was one of Henry's cognisances, as his father's before him.

‡ Page, pp. 44–45; Monstrelet, p. 449.



# CHAPTER XVI

## THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

### 1414–1418

WHILST Henry's arms pursued their triumphant course in Normandy, a success of a different kind had been achieved in another quarter. The Council of Constance had brought its long labours to a conclusion. If it had not fulfilled all that was expected of it, it had at least restored the semblance of unity to the Church. To this result Henry's influence had in no small degree contributed. The election of a Pope who could command the obedience of all Christendom was indeed a not less cardinal part of Henry's policy than the assertion of his own title to the Crown of France.*

The promoters of the Council avowed a threefold purpose; the restoration of unity in Christendom, the reformation of the Church in its head and members, and the extirpation of heresy. The evils of the Schism had extended much further than the

* I must acknowledge my indebtedness in regard to this chapter to Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, Lenz's *König Sigismund und Heinrich der Fünfte*, and Caro's *Das Bundniss von Canterbury*.

division in the Papacy. As a consequence of the defect of spiritual authority both the system and doctrines of the Church had been called in question. The abuses of the ecclesiastical hierarchy had grown so flagrant that even moderate churchmen desired a thorough reform of the Roman Curia. The teaching of Wycliffe and his Bohemian disciple Hus, originating in hatred for Papal aggression, had resulted in a movement that threatened the very basis of the ancient faith. Reformers and orthodox churchmen alike looked to a General Council as the only instrument which could remedy the abuses and disorders of Latin Christianity.

The questions presented to the Council were in their form of religious import only; but the assembly at Constance was more than an Ecclesiastical Council; it was an International Congress. The religious and political discords of the day were so entangled that neither churchmen nor statesmen could act independently. Nowhere was the ecclesiastical question of more pressing political importance than in England. It was during the stress of the Great War, and through the mischief of a French Papacy, that the English Parliament had been driven to its anti-papal legislation. It was the support which the French King gave to Clement and Benedict that determined the adhesion of England to Urban VI. and his Italian successors. It was the religious controversy, started by Papal pretensions and the Schism, which produced in England a social propaganda that threatened her with political disruption. If a radical cure was to be found for domestic

troubles, if the renewal of the war was to achieve its purpose, the unity of the Church must be restored under a Pope who could command the obedience of Christendom and would be above national differences. Not less essential was it to the realisation of Henry's greater dream of a new Crusade. So to the English King the Council of Constance was no mere incident of ecclesiastical policy; on its success depended the accomplishment of all his hopes.

In the Council itself there met currents and cross-currents. Theoretically all were agreed as to the threefold end; but as to the means, and the order in which the different subjects were to be taken there was much division. The Pope and his Curia had accepted the Council with reluctance, and would have been glad to confine its deliberations within the narrowest limits. Their aim was to prevent all interference with their own acquired privileges. But the reformation of papal abuses was the one question on which all other parties were most united. The Italians had the numerical superiority, and thought to carry their point by individual voting. This was met by a proposal of Robert Hallam, the chief English representative, in accordance with which the Council was organised in four Nations, Italian, French, German, and English. The Nations were to deliberate separately, and the ultimate decision was to rest with deputies chosen equally from them all. Driven from their first position, the Italians resorted to intrigue. The English and German Nations were in close alliance. But the political hostility of France and England found its



HALLAM AND THE EARL OF WARWICK RECEIVED BY POPE JOHN XXIII.

inevitable reflection in the Council. Even during the early sessions the Pope and his supporters endeavoured to turn this political hostility to their own advantage. So far as Pope John himself was concerned, the scheme had no success. When, however, political animosities became more acute, the French drew nearer to the Italians. Ultimately the two Latin Nations were ranged on the one side, and the Teutonic on the other. Thus the main grouping of the Council followed the national politics of the time; it foreshadowed also the greater and more permanent division of the Reformation.

The first six months of the Council were occupied with the vain endeavours of John XXIII. to avert his fate. Events culminated in the Pope's ignoble flight to Schaffhausen, his imprisonment, and his deposition (29th May, 1415). Simultaneously the Council had deliberated and decided on the case of Hus. The Pope had sought to divert attention from his own misdeeds by making the heresies of Wycliffe and Hus the first subject of discussion. The Bohemian reformer had come to the Council under a safe-conduct from the Emperor. But for the success of Sigismund's plans it was necessary to secure at whatever cost the support of the orthodox party against John. So the Emperor delivered Hus to his enemies, and preserved the harmony of the Council by the sacrifice of his own honour. On 6th July, a month after the deposition of the Pope, Hus was condemned and burnt as a heretic. The leader of the Council in both these questions was Pierre d'Ailly, the Parisian doctor and Cardinal of

Cambrai. The French Nation, whose spokesman d'Ailly was, had perhaps the most concern of all in procuring John's deposition. The abuses of the Papal Curia were felt keenly in France. But the official reforms which the University of Paris desired involved no sympathy with the doctrinal teaching of Hus, whom Gerson denounced as a subversor of all political order and ecclesiastical authority. Neither in the deposition of John XXIII. nor in the condemnation of Hus was there room for serious division. On both questions the earnest and orthodox churchmen of all nations were united. Thus the early sessions of the Council, if exciting, were on the whole harmonious; and when Sigismund started on his mission to Perpignan there was every prospect of a successful settlement.*

During the Emperor's long absence (August, 1415–January, 1417) the main business of the Council was necessarily at a standstill. John was deposed and Gregory had abdicated; but till it was known how Sigismund fared at Perpignan no steps could be taken towards a new election. Benedict proved immovable in his obstinate pride. Sigismund was, however, successful in securing the withdrawal of Aragon from the anti-Pope and the adhesion of Spain to the Council. Still affairs at Constance must await the Emperor's return. So it was somewhat of a disappointment when the news came of a fresh mission to Paris and London. How Sigismund was treated by the French, and how he was led on to a close alliance with England, has

* See above, pp. 165–167.

been described elsewhere. That alliance was to prove of more moment for the Council than anything that took place in Constance itself.

The chief subject upon which progress might have been made in Sigismund's absence was the reform of the Church in its head and members. Upon the necessity of some change all were in theory agreed, and a Commission was appointed to report on the question in July, 1415. When it came to a discussion of details the divergent interests of the several Nations prevented unanimity; whilst the Cardinals used their influence to defeat any project that might curtail Papal prestige and Papal revenues. The French were especially anxious to secure the abolition of annates; the English, thanks to King and Parliament, and the Germans and Italians for other reasons, were less interested. The Italians, under the influence of the Cardinalate, rejected the French proposals altogether; whilst the Germans and English, acting in concord, thought their discussion inadvisable. In face of these divisions nothing practical was done, and Sigismund himself wrote from Paris urging the Council to suspend all important business till his return.

Other matters also tended to disunion. The teaching of Jean Petit, a Parisian doctor who excused the murder of Louis of Orleans in 1407 under a general defence of tyrannicide, had been censured somewhat mildly by the Council. When after Agincourt the Armagnacs got the upper hand at Paris, Gerson reopened the question; prolonged and fierce debates ensued, with little result save to

diminish the authority of the French Nation, and to create a breach within its ranks. The disappointments and disunion of the French made them still more bitter in their animosity to the English; and so the triangular conflict of England, Armagnac, and Burgundy spread from the battle-fields of France to Constance.

The French representatives sought daily for any means whereby to damage their English rivals. An opportunity occurred when the envoys of Aragon arrived in September, 1416, and were admitted to the Council as representing a fifth Nation—the Spanish. The Aragonese, abetted by the French, first claimed precedence over the English, and then questioned the right of the latter to form a Nation at all. The discord was so serious that it threatened to wreck the Council altogether, and it was still unappeased when Sigismund returned to Constance in January, 1417.

The Emperor had shown no haste to return to the Council. Though he left Henry at Calais in mid-October, it was over three months before he reached Constance. Always extravagant and always needy, he had to pawn the presents which he received in England in order to pay the expenses of his journey. At last, on the 27th January, 1417, Sigismund re-entered Constance wearing the Collar of the Garter about his neck, which was "a glad sight to all Englishmen to see." He was met by a procession of the Cardinals and all the Nations; foremost among them, wrote John Forester to Henry V., were "your Lords in their best array

with all your Nation; and he received your Lords graciously with right good cheer, and of all the worshipful men of your Nation he touched their hands only in the great press." Robert Hallam contrived skilfully to get possession of the pulpit at the place of Council and to deliver the address of welcome; thus frustrating the intention of Pierre d'Ailly, whom Forester describes as "the Cardinal Cameracense, chief of the Nation of France and your special enemy." On the following day, and again on 29th January, the English Nation, under Bishop Catrik of Lichfield, their President, had audience of the Emperor, who "received them every man by his hand," and thanked them specially that they had been "so loving, true, and trusty to his Nation in his absence."*

Sigismund was ostentatious in his display of friendship for the Nation of his new ally. The French on their part were not slow to recognise the change in their position which resulted from so open a declaration of the Anglo-German alliance. Pierre d'Ailly had begun his career in the Council as the most ardent champion of Reform; but French patriotism overpowered ecclesiastical prejudices, and he now devoted all his energies to thwart and annoy the English representatives in the Council. When the Castilian envoys arrived early in March, he at once reopened the question of the Spanish Nation. The French protested that there were only four recognised Nations, the Italian,

* *Fœdera*, ix., 434–435; see also the letter from R. Appleton on the Nation question, *id.*, ix., 439.

French, German, and Spanish; the English were neither politically nor ecclesiastically equal to the others, and should be absorbed in the German. The English, styling themselves "ambassadors of the King of England and France," retorted to the representatives of "our adversary of France" with a wealth of not very accurate statistics. There were eight kingdoms subject to the English Crown,* not counting the Orkneys and other islands. The English realm had 110 dioceses and 52,000 parish churches; the French had only 60 and 6000 respectively. England and Germany together comprised nearly half Christendom, and it was absurd to count them only a single Nation. D'Ailly cannot have expected to carry his point. But he contrived to delay progress and to vex both the English and Germans.

D'Ailly had more justification when he led the Council into a long wrangle whether priority should be given to the election of a new Pope or to the cause of Reform. Two years previously, when the cause of unity had meant the deposition of Pope John, d'Ailly had been foremost in claiming for it priority over the cause of faith. So now there was a certain plausibility when he urged that the first duty of the Council was to restore unity. True, d'Ailly had been the leading advocate of Reform; but he was a Cardinal as well as a Parisian doctor, and in both capacities experience had taught him that Reform, if not carefully guarded, might go further than he wished. He had another and

* England, Scotland, Wales, the Sea, and four in Ireland.

deeper motive—French patriotism. The champion of Reform was Sigismund; and Sigismund, both in secular and Conciliar politics, was now the close ally of England. If with the help of the English Nation the Emperor prevailed in the Council, he would probably requite their services by supporting Henry in the field. If, moreover, the English and Germans were to mould ecclesiastical affairs to their liking, they would be able to secure the Papacy for a candidate of their own choice. Such an event meant a restoration of Imperial supremacy in Christendom, and the diminution—to the advantage of England—of the influence which France had so long exercised over papal policy. So the proceedings of the Council became more and more subservient to considerations of international politics. The Spanish Nation in the Council, as did the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon in secular matters, accepted the leadership of France. In their hostility to England and opposition to Sigismund, the French and Spanish, under the guidance of d'Ailly, drew nearer to the Italians and curial party. Thus was the grouping of the Council determined by the rivalry of France and England.

The wearisome debates on procedure went on throughout the spring and early summer. At last, on 11th July, a compromise was arranged. The deposition of Benedict was to come first; then the reformation of the Church in its head and in the Curia—reserving the more general question; thirdly the election of the new Pope. A fortnight later (26th July) Benedict was solemnly removed from

his office. The way then seemed clear for Reform; a fresh commission was appointed to report, and Sigismund, relying on the firm assistance of Robert Hallam, was sanguine of success. Still little progress was made; for the Cardinals discovered fresh reasons why the Council should proceed forthwith to a new election.

All this time Henry in England had watched the proceedings at Constance anxiously and closely. He desired, not less than did Sigismund, a stable settlement. But the solution of the ecclesiastical problem was only a step, if an essential step, towards his wider plans. The motives which inspired the Emperor and the English King in concluding the Treaty of Canterbury were somewhat different. Sigismund was intent on the situation at Constance; Henry looked first to the value of German assistance for a new campaign in France. It was understood that the Emperor was to be ready to take the field in the summer of 1417. Sigismund's plans and promises proved commonly to be in excess of his powers when the time came for fulfilment. On this occasion he had a genuine excuse, in that he could not control entirely either the princes of Germany or the proceedings of the Council. Henry on his part probably appreciated the weakness and difficulties of his ally. English interests in the Council were safe in the hands of Hallam, and for ordinary matters Sir Hartank van Clux was a trustworthy agent at the German Court. There must have been special reasons of State that prompted the successive missions of Tiptoft and of Philip

Morgan to Constance. The letters of subordinates like Forester and Appleton prove also how careful Henry was to keep himself informed about all that went on.*

We need not suppose that when Sigismund parted from Henry at Calais in October, 1416, he had any intention to fail in his undertaking. Henry himself, though recognising the difficulties of the situation, clearly looked for a successful issue from his diplomacy. The result was, however, disappointing. In spite of the loyal support rendered by his brother-in-law, Louis of Bavaria, the King's interests made little progress. It was true that on 22nd March Sigismund declared war on France. But it was not till 24th May that the Treaty of Canterbury was formally ratified. Even then nothing was done to make it effective; and when orders were at last issued for a general armament Louis alone obeyed the summons and mustered his contingent. As the summer wore away it became clear that Sigismund would fail to keep his word, and would plead in excuse the delays of the Council. Henry had counted on the armed assistance of Germany; for he recognised the tax which the French war would impose on his unaided resources. The time was opportune for action in France, and on political grounds alone the English King must have desired to see such a settlement of affairs at Constance as would leave his ally free to take the field.

There were other reasons which prompted Henry to a change of policy. The continued abeyance of

* *Fœdera*, ix., 385, 412, 427, 434, 439.

the Papacy was proving mischievous to English interests. The defect of spiritual authority made the repression of political Lollardy less easy. There were troubles also in the administration of Church affairs. In April, 1416, with the consent of Parliament, Henry ordered that "during the vacancy of the Apostolic See through the damnable Schism" persons elected to bishoprics should be confirmed by the Metropolitans without delay.* Had the King so desired, such circumstances might have led to the complete independence of the English Church. But Henry had no wish to break with established traditions. His aim was to restore old ideals, not to create a new order. As for the need of curial reform, the legislation of the past century had provided a check on papal abuses. King and Parliament were well able to maintain all the privileges of the English Church. Ecclesiastical anarchy was a more real danger; and there was the further possibility that a prolonged contest might result after all in the restoration of French influence at the Papal Court. If, on the other hand, a compromise was effected by English mediation, Henry would enjoy the credit of restoring unity to Christendom, and might reasonably expect a return of gratitude from the new Pope. Such were the considerations of policy which probably inspired the order given by Henry on 18th July, 1417, that all his subjects at the Council should render strict obedience to the authorised English representatives.†

* *Fœdera*, ix., 337. Cf. *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 71.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 466.

It can hardly have been a mere coincidence that Henry Beaufort now resigned the Chancellorship, and, under the pretence of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, journeyed to the neighbourhood of Constance.

Sigismund seems to have felt that his own conduct required defence. Henry may perhaps have addressed to him some remonstrance with which we are not acquainted. At all events, on 4th August, and again twelve days later, the Emperor wrote, regretting that the long delays in the Council had prevented him from joining Henry on the French frontier as arranged with Tiptoft. The deposition of Peter de Luna (Benedict XIII.) had been at last accomplished, but the Reformation was still unfinished. He was confident that an ecclesiastical settlement touched Henry no less nearly than himself. An early conclusion might now be expected, and nothing save death should keep him from coming to the assistance of his ally in the following May.*

As usual, Sigismund was sanguine; but he could not have foreseen the misfortune which would befall him through the death of Robert Hallam, on 4th September. Hallam, by his straightforward ability and skilful diplomacy, had secured a position of authority in the Council. He had pursued consistently the policy of an Anglo-German alliance, and enjoyed the confidence both of Henry and Sigismund. Probably his last instructions had given him a discretionary power, and would have been used by him to arrange a compromise with the

* *Aus der Kanzlei Sigismunds*, pp. 128–130, 132.

Emperor's concurrence. At his death the leadership of the English Nation fell into feeble and less skilful hands.

In a general congregation on 9th September, the Cardinals presented a protest pressing for an immediate election. The protest was renewed in stronger terms four days later, when to Sigismund's indignant surprise the English without warning appointed deputies to confer with the Cardinals as to the necessary procedure. Bishop Catrik of Lichfield made a lame apology. He could not venture to avow the secret instructions which he had used so clumsily *; he had not the strength nor the skill of Hallam; and had perhaps turned too ready an ear to the Cardinals.†

Sigismund, deprived of English support, had to give his consent to the election of a Pope subject to a guaranty for eventual reform (2nd October). Still the opposing parties could not agree as to the terms of the guaranty, nor as to the procedure at the Conclave. This conjuncture afforded an opportunity for the mediation of Beaufort, who, at the suggestion of the English, was invited to come from Ulm to Constance. It is possible that the Bishop was the bearer of letters from the King.‡ At all events Beaufort was too familiar with his nephew's policy to have acted against it. Under his guid-

* Cardinal Filastre says of the English: "Ad mandatum regis Anglie dimiserunt regem Romanorum."—Creighton, ii., 95.

† It is suspicious that Cardinal Orsini, on 5th September, recommended Catrik to Henry on the ground of his labours "ad perfectam ecclesiæ unionem."—*Fœdera*, ix., 487.

‡ As Caro (*Bundniss von Canterbury*, p. 95) suggests.

ance the English Nation assumed the position of arbitrators between the extreme parties, the Germans and the Cardinals. An arrangement was at last concluded which provided for certain reforms in the Curia to be made after the election of a Pope, and for the formation of a Conclave consisting of the twenty-three Cardinals and six deputies from each Nation.

The Conclave assembled on 9th November, but no progress was made till the 11th. At the first scrutiny it was found that the English had voted unanimously for the Cardinal Oddo Colonna. Colonna was not favoured by his colleagues or the French. But the solid front presented by the English prevailed, and at a fresh scrutiny he obtained the requisite majority. The new Pope, who took the name of Martin V., was a man of irreproachable character and noble birth; in the Council he had shown himself to be moderate and sensible, had taken no extreme side, and had made no enemies.

Henry had every reason to congratulate himself on the result of the Conclave. His timely change of policy had brought him the credit of having done most to end the Schism. The action of his representatives had secured the choice of a Pope, who was personally acceptable to the Emperor, and not likely to be amenable to French influence. Martin's election promised to foster the Anglo-German alliance, and to enable Henry to accomplish his greater plans without risk of ecclesiastical complications.

The satisfaction with which Henry and Sigismund regarded the election proved somewhat premature.

In the subsequent sessions at Constance Martin contrived to assert his authority so dexterously that the Council dissolved without any definite conclusion on the dangerous subject of Reform. Such questions as were decided were embodied in separate Concordats with the different nations. The English Concordat stood alone for its brevity and trivial character; the will of Parliament and a strong ruler were a sufficient protection for the English Church.

Throughout his pontificate Martin showed the same address, and by his prudent conduct became the creator of the modern Papacy. His personal relations with Henry were friendly; but he would gladly have assumed the rôle of arbitrator between France and England, and was watchful for any opportunity to reassert his authority in English affairs. Henry received the Cardinals whom Martin sent to France in 1418 courteously; but he did not allow their negotiations to disturb his own plans. In ecclesiastical matters also the Pope found that Henry's orthodoxy involved no weakness.

One of Martin's earliest acts as Pope was to name Henry Beaufort Cardinal. No doubt his first motive was gratitude for the English Bishop's share in his election. An ulterior purpose is revealed in the proposal that Beaufort should become *legatus a latere* of the Holy See in England. It is certain that Martin was anxious to reduce the English Church to its old subservience, and apparently he hoped to find his instrument in Beaufort. Archbishop Chichele at once protested against the pro-



ARCHBISHOP CHICHELE.

FROM HIS TOMB.

posal as an invasion of his own rights and of the privileges of the English Church. Henry peremptorily required his uncle to forego the proffered dignity, saying that "he had as lief sette his couronne besyde him, as to see hym were a Cardinal's hatte." * The hint was not enough for Martin, who tried, in defiance of the national laws, to force his nominees into English benefices. This conduct and the diplomatic assistance which the Pope's envoys were rendering to the French drove Henry to remonstrate. On 25th September, 1418, the King by his own hand sent instructions to Catrik, who was now the English representative at the Papal Court.† Catrik was to point out to Martin in private how the French had fostered the Schism, and infected Spain and Scotland with their poison. The war had been prosecuted for the interest and security of the Pope and the Christian Faith, and entitled Henry to Martin's consideration and assistance. He was to remind the Pope also of the form of Concord which had been established between Edward III. and Gregory XI., which Martin had, perhaps inadvertently, disregarded. The King therefore desired that the Pope would ratify anew that Concord, or not resent it if he used the same right and power in all things respecting the Regalia as he had ever done before. ‡

* Stevenson, *Letters Illustrative of the Wars in France*, ii., 441.

† Catrik had accompanied Martin from Constance and spent the rest of his life at the Papal Court. He died at Florence on 28th December, 1419, and was buried in Santa Croce, where his tomb still exists.

‡ Goodwin, pp. 209–211, ex. Cotton. MS., Cleopatra, E. ii.

Catrik reported the result of his conference with the Pope in a letter dated 5th February, 1419. Martin was effusive in his declarations of friendship; "raising his eyes to heaven, he said: 'We know now what we believed before, that our son loves us; verily, verily all the theologians in the world have not so moved us as doth our son's eloquence.'" * The Pope was careful to avoid any explicit assurance, and after a few months reopened the whole question as though nothing had happened.

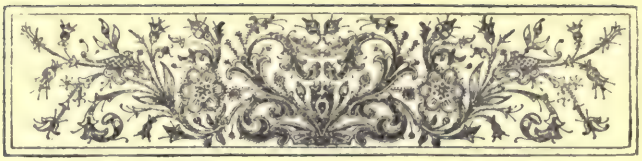
In October, 1419, Henry Greenfield, an English official of the Curia, came to Mantes on Papal business. On Martin's behalf he exhorted the English King to peace, and begged that he would abrogate the laws which were so hurtful to Papal authority. The King made answer through Philip Morgan. He was now, as always, anxious for peace; should a favourable opportunity occur, he would take care to inform the Pope accordingly. The pressure of the war did not leave him such leisure for other business as he could desire. But the statutes to which the Pope referred were no new ones, and Henry was so bound by his coronation oath that he could not, if he would, without the consent of Parliament, interpret, abrogate, or modify them. †

Martin had to accept this rebuff with the best grace he might. With patient persistence he bided his time. After Henry's death he made Beaufort Cardinal and legate, and though he could not obtain the repeal of the obnoxious statutes, contrived to

* *Fœdera*, ix., 680.

† *Id.*, ix., 806.

humiliate Chichele and increase his own authority. But so long as Henry lived Martin had to recognise that the King, for all his orthodoxy, was the firm defender of national privileges, and would not suffer the right of the English Church to manage her own affairs to be called in question.



# CHAPTER XVII

## THE BRIDGE OF MONTEREAU

### 1419

AFTER the surrender of Rouen Henry resided in the Castle until the town "was set in rule and governance."* His first care was to make provision for the starving townsfolk; but famine had gained such a hold that it was more than a fortnight before the mortality could be checked. As on previous occasions, a brief respite from war meant only leisure for civil government. The organisation of the exchequer was perfected, commercial regulations issued, and money struck bearing the legend, "*Henricus Rex Francie.*" But in the ancient capital of his Norman ancestors Henry felt himself to be the heir of William the Conqueror, more than of St. Louis. On Candlemas Day a great feast was held, at which the King appeared in his robes as Duke of Normandy. Under the terms of the capitulation the citizens had to provide a site for a ducal palace, and by Henry's orders the erection of the New Palace at Rouen was commenced in the early

* *English Chronicle.*

summer of 1419.* In the course of February the Estates of Normandy were assembled to meet their new Duke. Though the greater nobles had gone into exile, a considerable number of the lesser gentry seem to have bowed to the inevitable and made their submission. The chief of Henry's Norman adherents was Guy le Bouteiller, the sometime Burgundian governor of Rouen. French writers naturally denounced him as a traitor, but Guy had, as a Norman and a captive, to choose between submission or prison. Henry made him lieutenant for the Duke of Exeter at Rouen, and in this post Guy showed his fidelity by revealing a French plot for the capture of the city.

Whilst the King was occupied with civil affairs, his captains were completing the conquest of Normandy. Exeter had the command in the north-east; Caudebec and Montivilliers yielded immediately after Rouen, and the surrender of Lillebonne, Fécamp, Dieppe, Gournay, and Eu followed in quick succession during the early days of February. The Earl of Salisbury met with more resistance at Honfleur, which did not open its gates till 16th March. Clarence directed the advance up the Seine; Vernon yielded without striking a blow on 3rd February, and the citizens of Mantes sent the keys of their town to the Duke without even awaiting his arrival.

When Henry left Rouen on 25th March only five places still held out for the French in Normandy,

* Later on it became "Le Vieux Palais." James II. of England stayed there in 1692. It was destroyed during the Revolution.

and of these La Roche Guyon was captured in April and Ivry in May.* So demoralised were the French by their own feuds and the English victories, that their garrisons seldom offered any resistance, but marched out of one gate as the English entered at the other. The tide of conquest overflowed the boundaries of Normandy on every side, and still the soldiers of the Dauphin and of Burgundy skulked like foxes in their fortresses, as though no foreign enemy was before their gates.†

The fall of Rouen, the second city of the kingdom, was a shock that made itself felt through the whole length and breadth of France. Yet it did not inspire either the Dauphin or Burgundy with any better policy than their old diplomatic intrigues. Henry met the wishes of both parties, with equal readiness. But his own diplomacy was of a wider range. A scheme was afoot for the adoption of Bedford by Queen Joanna of Naples. Proposals were made to marry Bedford to a German princess, and Gloucester to a daughter of Charles III. of Navarre. Negotiations were also proceeding with the Republic of Genoa, the mercantile cities of Flanders, and the Archbishops of Trèves and Mayence.‡ These varied schemes were, it is true, in a measure tentative; still, they show that the horizon of Henry's diplomacy was not bounded by the immediate crisis in French affairs.

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* The other three were Gisors, Chateau Gaillard, and Mont St. Michel. The last was never taken.

† *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 323–325, 363.

‡ *Fœdera*, ix., 700, 701, 705, 706, 710, 711, 715, 716.

Only two days after the fall of Rouen, on 21st January, Henry reopened his negotiations with the Dauphin. Three weeks later an agreement was made for a conference to be held between Evreux and Dreux on 26th March.* In the meantime the Duke of Brittany, somewhat anxious for his own position and despairing of French politics, visited Henry at Rouen and concluded a truce to the great advantage of his duchy. On 25th March Henry left Rouen for Evreux. The Dauphin, unmindful of the solemn oath which he had taken, failed to put in an appearance.

"He hath broke his surety, and made the King a *beau nient*," wrote one of Henry's followers. "So there may none hope be had as yet of peace. God put hand thereto when His will is. Certes all the ambassadors that we deal with be incongrue, that is to say in old manner of speech in English, 'they be double and false.' Pray for us that we may come soon out of this unlusty soldier's life into the life of England."†

Probably the bad faith of the Dauphin did not take Henry by surprise. Negotiations had for some time been in progress with Burgundy. The Earl of Warwick, accompanied by Sir John Grey and Sir Gilbert Umfraville, visited the French Court at Provins, and arranged for an interview to take place on 15th May. In the meantime there was to be a truce between the English and Burgundians with an

* *Fœdera*, ix., 670, 676, 686.

† Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Series, i., 77; "*beau nient*" is the Italian "*bello niente*," "a fine fool."

exception for Normandy, where Henry's troops still held their siege before Gisors and Ivry.

It was a strange period of confusion in which the three parties fought and treated one with another. The Dauphin's men had treacherously captured Soissons from the Burgundians, and, in spite of a truce, Tanneguy du Chatel had attacked Warwick when on his way to Provins.* Yet when a report got about that Henry and Burgundy were like to make terms, the Dauphin reopened negotiations with them both. The English King rejected his overtures; even Burgundy was more trustworthy than the adventurers who controlled the Dauphin's policy. Burgundy would not, perhaps dared not, take a similar course. He was enough of a statesman to perceive the need for a reconciliation, and may well have grown alarmed and weary at the web of intrigue which he had spun about him. The moderate men in both French parties were sincerely anxious for peace; and even the extremists feared lest by too open concession to the English they might increase the authority of the rival faction. Nevertheless, their negotiations led to nothing more substantial than a three-months' truce.

Henry spent Easter (16th April) at Vernon, where he remained till the time for the Conference. The French found the proposed date inconvenient, and a postponement was agreed upon to 30th May.

* One of the few facts that we know about the writer of the "Life of Henry V.," which passes under the name of Elmham, is that he was present on this occasion.—Elmham, *Vita*, p. 215.



THE EARL OF WARWICK FIGHTS WITH THE FRENCH.

Meantime representatives on both sides were busy with arrangements for the Conference, which was to be held at some place between Mantes and Pontoise. After a prolonged search they fixed on a meadow by the Seine near Meulan called "La Pré du Chat." The river enclosed it on one side and a pond or backwater on the other. So it was easy to arrange for the Conference to be held without intrusion. The field was listed and fenced all round, with an entrance at either end. The French, whose sad experience of such conferences in their own affairs rendered them mistrustful, made a strong ditch and palisade; but the English were content with a simple barrier. In the midst of the field were three pavilions, one, distinguished by a large eagle of gilt, for the Conference, and the other two for the use of the great personages of each nation.* Outside the lists there were such crowds of gaily coloured tents for the guards and suites that there seemed to be a city under canvas. The number of the escorts was carefully fixed, and only sixty knights and squires and sixteen councillors were to be admitted within the lists on either side.

Henry came to Mantes on Sunday, 28th May, and on the same day Burgundy, accompanied by King Charles, Queen Isabel, and the Princess Catherine, arrived at Pontoise. On the Monday Archbishop Chichele, the Duke of Exeter, and the Earl of Warwick paid a ceremonial visit to the French Court, and made the final arrangements for

* *English Chronicle*, Harley MS. 2256, f. 194 v°

the Conference. On the following day,* about three o'clock in the afternoon, the two parties entered the enclosure simultaneously, and advanced in state to a low barrier at the centre. The scene was splendid with knights in shining armour and lords and ladies in cloth of gold or silver. Henry bowed low before Isabel and Catherine and kissed them courteously. To Burgundy, who slightly bent his knee, he gave his hand.† Then he conducted the Queen to the Conference Tent, where two chairs draped in cloth of gold had been placed side by side. As soon as the King and Queen were seated, the Earl of Warwick knelt before them and made Isabel a formal address in French. There was much ceremony but little business, and after the two parties had mutually agreed not to break off the Conference without eight days' notice, the meeting concluded.

The second and third meetings were held on the 1st and 5th of June. Henry's demands were for the hand of Catherine in marriage, with all the territory ceded by the Peace of Bretigny and the addition of Normandy; the whole to be held in full sovereignty. In reply the French required: first, that the English King should renounce all title to the Crown of France; this was agreed to with a saving for the

* The statements in Elmham, *Vita*, p. 217 (the writer seems to have been present), and Des Ursins, p. 549, are conclusive for 30th May, which was the appointed day. Cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 746, and Douet d'Arcq, *Pièces Inédites*, i., 402. But the document in *Fœdera*, ix., 759, gives 29th May.

† The French King was not fit to attend and had been left at Pontoise.

ceded lands. Secondly, would Henry abandon all claims to Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Brittany, and Flanders? This he refused. Next, would Henry promise for himself and his successors never to accept from any person the cession of any title to the French Crown? To this, which was intended to preclude a subsequent treaty with the Dauphin, he agreed, provided the other party would give a like guaranty; such a qualified acceptance was in effect a refusal, and Henry himself afterwards styled the proposal an unreasonable limitation of his liberty. In the fourth place, would Henry have the treaty solemnly ratified by the Three Estates of his Realm? This he rejected absolutely as an insult to his kingly dignity. There followed some minor questions dealing with Ponthieu and Catherine's dowry, to which the King gave a modified approval.

In Henry's demands and the French counter-proposals there was enough matter for controversy, even if they were made with good intent. But probably the two parties suspected each other's loyalty from the first; and at the fourth meeting, on 13th June, Henry kept his escort under arms outside the lists, though no one knew why. However, at the fifth meeting, three days later, relations were so friendly that the English King made a great feast for the soldiers of both nations. The final conferences were held on the 26th and 30th of June. By that time it had become notorious that Burgundy was once more in treaty with the Dauphin. Under such circumstances the conferences at Meulan were not likely to bear fruit. On the last day the King

and Burgundy met in private. High words passed between them, and finally Henry told the Duke: "Fair cousin, we would have you to wit that we will have your King's daughter and all we have demanded, or else we will drive him and you out of his kingdom." Nevertheless there was no open rupture, and a further conference was fixed for 3rd July. The French failed to put in an appearance. Henry perhaps felt a little chagrin at the failure of his diplomacy. At all events, he was determined to throw the responsibility for a breach on the other party. Chichele and Warwick were again commissioned to treat with Burgundy, and the issue was supposed to be still uncertain.*

However, on Saturday (8th July) in this same week, Burgundy and the Dauphin met, with many precautions, at Pouilly-le-Fort near Melun. At first they could come to no terms; "You might as well talk to a deaf ass as to the Duke," said the Dauphin's representatives. In the end, through the intervention of the Dame de Giac, an old lady who had been Burgundy's mistress and knew the Dauphin in his cradle, a treaty was concluded on 11th July. The two princes agreed to share the government between them, and to make no terms with the English save by common consent.† The news was received with great rejoicing at Paris, but events soon proved the hollowness of the peace.

* For the Conference at Meulan see Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 216–225; Des Ursins, pp. 549–551; Monstrelet, pp. 453, 454; and *Fœdera*, ix., 753, 759–764, and 789, 790.

† *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 328–332.

Henry learnt of the treaty between Burgundy and the Dauphin without delay. Still he professed to think the result of his own negotiations doubtful, and left it to the other side to notify the termination of the truce. An English soldier wrote home from Mantes on 14th July: "For this accord it is supposed in the King's host rather war than peace, though at this time it is not known which we shall have." In the same letter we get what was no doubt the popular explanation of the failure of the Meulan Conference: "When it was brought to the point for the Treaty to have been engrossed and fully to have been made an end of, the French party hath come with divers demands and questions in letting and tarrying of that matter." * Henry in his official account of the Conference declares that he used every effort to secure success, but the French would do nothing to meet him, insisting on the acceptance of their conditions without modification; the responsibility for the rupture rested with the party who refused to renew the negotiations. The technical point upon which the Conference had been broken off was the objection of the French to furnish an authentic statement in writing of the articles agreed upon.†

On the French side Juvenal des Ursins‡ relates that there was a long debate in the council of Burgundy and Isabel as to the best course to pursue; finally it was determined to treat with the Dauphin rather than the English. The true

* *Fœdera*, ix., 779. † *Id.*, ix., 789, 790. ‡ P. 551.

position seems to be revealed in a letter which Queen Isabel addressed to Henry two months later. The negotiations at Meulan were, says Isabel, defeated by the crooked intrigues of her son but for whom a general peace might have been established between France and England, as well as between the natives of this kingdom. Without the Dauphin's assent nothing could be done, "for our councillors declared that if we and our cousin of Burgundy had accepted your terms, all the barons, knights, cities, and good towns of our lord the King would have abandoned us for our son." Isabel and Burgundy did all they could to induce the Dauphin to come to his father's Court, as he had promised at Pouilly, but he would not. Hence the failure of the peace, and all the evils that ensued.* In spite of their pretended agreement the mutual jealousy and suspicion of her princes continued to be the bane of France.

Henry observed the truce with strictness, but made his preparations to strike a vigorous blow the moment that it expired. Pontoise, which is scarcely twenty miles from Mantes, commanded the passage of the Oise and the road to Paris from the north. During the late negotiations the town had been visited by many English knights, who had formed a just opinion of the order of its defences and garrison. The information thus obtained and the importance of the position determined Henry to attempt a surprise at the first opportunity. The

* Letter from Queen Isabel, ap. Du Fresne de Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII.*, i., 186, 187.

truce came to an end on 29th July, and on the following day the resumption of hostilities was proclaimed. That same afternoon an English force set out from Mantes in two divisions. Gaston de Foix, a Gascon noble whom Henry had made Count of Longueville in Normandy, led the van; the supports were under the Earl of Huntingdon. The march was so timed that the van should reach Pontoise at daybreak, when the guard was changed. Gaston and his men for greater security left their horses at a little distance, and completing their march on foot, lay hid in the vineyards near the town till dawn. There were hardly any sentinels on watch; the scaling party set their ladders to the walls unobserved, clambered up, and broke open a gate to admit their comrades. In they rushed in a body and roused the French from their beds with the cry: "St. George! St. George! The town is taken!" The Sire de L'Isle Adam, who was captain of Pontoise, mounted his horse half-armed and endeavoured to muster his men. Though all was in confusion the French in scattered bands made here and there a good resistance. Huntingdon, who had lost his way, did not appear, and at first it seemed as though the attack might fail. But at the critical moment came a welcome trumpet-call, and the English cavalry, dusty with their long night march, charged into the town. There was no more thought of resistance. L'Isle Adam was the first to raise the cry, "*Tout est perdu: sauve qui peut!*" Soldiers and citizens alike hastily caught up any valuables they could, and poured pell-mell out

through the far gates along the road to Paris. Huntingdon's horsemen swept through the streets like a storm, cutting down those who resisted, and driving the others in a hopeless rout before them. The fugitives were the first to bring the news to the French Court at St. Denis. Without waiting even for dinner, Burgundy and the King and Queen took flight in haste for Troyes. At Paris itself all was alarm and confusion for fear of the enemy. The English, however, were well satisfied with their achievement, and remained to pillage Pontoise. The booty was enormous; it was said that there were enough stores to have lasted the garrison two years. Henry wrote home that in all his wars abroad he had accomplished nothing more serviceable.*

So swift and dramatic a stroke showed not less statecraft than generalship. The moral effect of the fall of Pontoise was immense. The French were in consternation; such a disaster, it was said, must be due to treachery; Burgundy had sold the town to the English; L'Isle Adam had been more concerned to save his ill-gotten treasure, acquired during the Armagnac massacres, than to keep his charge. For fear of the English, the country folk from the villages took refuge in Paris. The governors of the capital themselves expected an attack, and mustered men-at-arms and crossbowmen under a Gascon captain, Ponce de Chatillon. Ponce tried to enforce good

* Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 330; Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 227–230; *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 352–354; Monstrelet, pp. 458, 459; Des Ursins, p. 552; Douet d'Arcq, *Pièces Inédites*, i., 404.

order as became those who served under the colours; so his men deposed him and chose another in his stead. These brave mercenaries were good plunderers on their own account; but they kept no watch and let the English under Clarence reconnoitre undisturbed right up to the walls of Paris. "Our business," they said, "is to hold the city, and not to make sorties." However, Henry did not think it expedient to attack the capital. He spent a fortnight at Pontoise, and after arranging for its garrison, went away on 18th August to besiege Vauconvilliers. He could well occupy himself with consolidating his conquests, whilst his adversaries developed their politics.

The loss of Pontoise was a severe blow to the reputation of Burgundy, and as a consequence encouraged the pretensions of his extreme opponents. The compact of Pouilly was still unfulfilled. Tanneguy du Chatel and the President Louvet, who directed the Dauphin's policy, had accepted its terms with reluctance. They foresaw that their own authority would be at an end on the day that their master surrendered his separate government and returned to his father's Court. Of statesmanship they knew nothing; and now a more congenial path seemed to open before them. The moderate party at Paris and the Court at Troyes were pressing for the performance of the agreement. Their anxiety was their opponents' opportunity. In reply to Burgundy's overtures Tanneguy and his associates proposed another interview. For the furtherance of their scheme they came to Troyes

with a letter from the Dauphin couched in the most affectionate terms, and asking the Duke to meet him at Montereau-faut-Yonne. It was then Burgundy's turn to be suspicious: why should not the prince come to Troyes as had been intended? Tanneguy was artful, and made a pretence of seeking fresh instructions. He returned with the Bishop of Valence, whose brother was one of Burgundy's principal councillors. The Duke declared that he had been warned of a plot to compass his murder. It was all a baseless lie, replied Tanneguy; his master had no desire but peace, and as evidence of his good faith would cede the castle to the Duke and lodge himself in the town. The Bishop of Valence, who knew of no plot, added his assurances with manifest sincerity. Burgundy was at last convinced and promised that he would come as the Dauphin wished.

The meeting was fixed for 26th August, and Burgundy left Troyes in due course. But when he came to Bray his fears revived. Fresh warnings reached him; his own memories of treason, and his habitual indecision, prompted delay. He would go no farther, but could not resolve to go back. Then Tanneguy came again from Montereau with fresh assurances and solicitations; he was supported by the moderate party, who wished for peace, and by the influence of the Dame de Giac. Once more Burgundy yielded, and set out for Montereau, on 10th September, in the company of Tanneguy and a number of nobles of his own party. On their arrival the Duke went to rest in the castle, whilst

Tanneguy departed to report the success of his mission to the Dauphin.

The castle of Montereau was on the east side of the river opposite the town. The interview was to take place on the bridge between. The ends of the bridge were strongly barricaded, and it was agreed that the princes should each bring only ten followers. Early in the afternoon the Dauphin sent a message that he was ready and waiting for the Duke. About three o'clock Burgundy left the castle. Some of his friends were still uneasy, but John was now resolved and put aside their fears, declaring, "We must risk something in the cause of peace." At the barrier Tanneguy met him, and Burgundy with a friendly greeting said: "See, here is one to whom I trust myself."

As soon as Burgundy and his companions had entered the enclosure, the Dauphin's men shut the gate and locked it on the inner side. The prince was at the far end leaning against the barrier. John crossed the bridge and courteously knelt before his cousin. Some words passed between them, but what was their tenor is disputed. The conspirators sought a pretext for their intended violence.* Burgundy's long sword had got entangled as he knelt on the ground; he put out his hand to replace it. "What! would you touch your sword in my lord's presence?" cried Robert de Lairé. "It is time," said Tanneguy, and struck the Duke a blow with

* According to one account they wilfully insulted the Duke, and when he made a show of resentment, attacked him. In the narrative above I have tried to harmonise the conflicting stories.

his axe. Burgundy stumbled, and before he could recover himself the other conspirators despatched him as he lay on the ground, whilst Tanneguy lifted the terrified Dauphin over the barrier. The Burgundians were taken by surprise, and their companions outside the locked gate could do nothing to help them. The Sire de Noailles was killed in a vain attempt to save his master, the others were forced to yield themselves prisoners. The Duke's body was left where he fell till the morning, when it was buried without reverence in the church at Montereau. Thus perished John of Burgundy. The author of so many intrigues and treasons deserved little pity. But though the policy of his life had been ruinous to France, there was nothing in it so fatal as the manner and moment of his death.





# CHAPTER XVIII

## THE TREATY OF TROYES

### 1419–1420

DURING the last months of his life, the authority and reputation of John of Burgundy had been on the wane. His indecision and his ill-success inclined many of his own party to favour an agreement with the Dauphin. Even in Paris he had lost his old popularity: for since the Armagnac massacres he had treated the citizens with marked coldness. The murder at Montereau restored the strength of the Burgundian party; all were now united in a common wish for revenge. Philip the new Duke at Ghent, Queen Isabel and the Court at Troyes, the Parliament and the citizens at Paris, regarded with equal favour the prospect of an English alliance.

Henry must have realised at once what an opportunity Fortune had given him. Wisely he took no steps to hasten the course of events, but left French politics to their necessary and natural development. Meantime he showed no lack of energy in strengthening his own position. After leaving Pontoise he

paid a brief visit to Rouen, and early in September went to direct the siege of Gisors. The town, which had been besieged six months, at last surrendered on 17th September, and the castle yielded a week later. The garrison of Gisors was Burgundian; but they had held themselves not less stoutly than did the Dauphin's men at the same time in Les Andelys, or Château Gaillard. That famous fortress, the "Saucy Castle" of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, perched on a rocky height three hundred feet above the river, commanded the passage of the Seine and was of essential importance. Its isolation, was, however, complete, and its fall was only a question of time. Henry therefore left the siege to Exeter and himself went on to Mantes.

Overtures had already been received from Philip of Burgundy, and from the governors of Paris. Henry did not for that reason relax his efforts, intending to be ready for any result. At Mantes he could conveniently watch the negotiations, and at the same time prepare the way for an advance on Paris. The first step was to capture Meulan, which was but a little town, but was well garrisoned and protected by the winding Seine. The French had thick set the river with stakes to prevent an attack by water. The English collected all the boats they could find and built floating castles on rafts, under cover of which they contrived to clear the river and approach the town. Finding their resistance hopeless, the garrison at last made terms* and on 6th

* *Chronique de Normandie*, p. 196; Elmham, *Vita*, p. 240, says 29th October, which was probably the date of the "appointment."

November surrendered the town. When Meulan and its bridge were in English hands, further progress was easy. Early in November Humphrey of Gloucester took Poissy and St. Germain with the neighbouring castle of Montjoye. At the end of the month Henry left Mantes for Rouen, where within a few days he received the welcome news of the fall of Château Gaillard.

In the Norman capital Henry spent the next four months. Thence he could direct the course of his negotiations with the French princes, whilst at the same time he was near at hand to his advisers in England. But what most required his personal attention was the organisation of his new conquests. It was perhaps to assist in the work of civil administration that in January, 1420, Bedford resigned the Regency of England to Humphrey of Gloucester and came over to join the King at Rouen. Henry still pursued in Normandy his policy of conciliation, and the measures which he adopted began to bear fruit. Commerce revived; Breton and Flemish traders revisited once more the Norman ports, and even merchants from Paris were allowed to come and go freely under cover of truce. The natives of Normandy were offered every inducement to accept the English rule; numbers of the lesser gentry and burgesses made their submission, and were confirmed in the property which they had held before August, 1417. The work of reorganising the government went on apace; almost every day we find recorded the appointments of sergeants, verderers, receivers of taxes, or assisers of salt. Such minor

posts were held generally by native Normans. The more important officers, the Treasurer, the Chancellor, and the Bailiffs, were still English.* So much progress had been made that it was possible to impose fresh taxes, and thus meet in part the great expenses of the war. English interests were also considered, and a renewed attempt was made to strengthen the colonies in the ports of entry. During Henry's stay at Rouen over a hundred grants of houses were made to settlers at Harfleur, Caen, and Cherbourg; though some of these were bestowed on courtiers, the majority appear to have been given to traders and craftsmen. Nothing could illustrate better how much the work of government owed to Henry's personal direction than the record of his stay at Rouen contained in the Norman Roll for this year.†

Whilst the King of England was thus busy with his warfare and civil government, what had the Dauphin's party attempted? The murder at Montereau dismayed his more moderate supporters, who were not privy to the plot; the authors of the villainy had never stopped to consider consequences. Hence Charles remained inactive for ten days at Montereau. However, the affair had to be made the best of; and in a series of letters addressed to the chief cities of France, it was endeavoured to put the blame upon

* William Alyngton was Treasurer; Morgan was still Chancellor. John Assheton, Roger Ferrys, John Popham, Gilbert Halsale, and Walter de Beauchamp were Bailiffs respectively of the Cotentin, Caux, Caen, Evreux, and Rouen.

† *Calendar of Norman Rolls*, ap. *Forty-second Report of Deputy-Keeper*, pp. 332–371; *Fœdera*, ix., 852–888.

Burgundy, who it was said had fallen in a fair fight caused by his own folly. Such a version found little favour in northern France, where the old hatred for the Armagnacs revived in full force. The Dauphin's advisers seem to have recognised the hopelessness of their cause in the North; they "were not men of the Kingdom," * and their own sympathies and associations were chiefly with the South. They showed their sense of the situation, when, after spending the autumn at Poitiers, they took the prince for a progress through southern France. In January, 1420, Charles came to Lyons, and after confirming his authority in Dauphiné, passed on to Toulouse. The support of the Count of Foix † secured him the adhesion of Languedoc, and almost all the South accepted his government. Equally well planned was a scheme for obtaining foreign assistance. So early as the spring of 1419 the Dauphin had been in treaty with the King of Castile and the Regent of Scotland. It was proposed to bring soldiers from Scotland in ships supplied from Spain. Henry had warning of their intention too late. The Scots evaded the English fleet in the Channel, and in October six thousand men landed at La Rochelle under the command of John Stewart, Earl of Buchan and son of the Regent Albany. Three months later the combined French and Spanish fleet fell in with the English off La Rochelle and won a considerable

* Tanneguy du Chatel was a Breton, Louvet a Provençal, Barbazan and the Vicomte de Narbonne Gascons.

† Brother of Gaston who took Pontoise for Henry, and of the Sire de Noailles who was slain at Montereau.

victory. These honourable achievements were, however, marred by a foolish plot in another quarter. Duke John of Brittany, when his efforts for peace failed, had determined to observe a strict neutrality. Tanneguy thereupon formed a scheme to displace him by his rival the Count of Penthièvre, who by treachery took the Duke prisoner and carried him off to Poitou. The faithful Bretons at once rose in arms, and, after a struggle, forced Penthièvre to release their rightful sovereign. Henry was prompt to take advantage; he gave the Duchess Jeanne * his active sympathy, and allowed the Duke's brother Arthur de Richemont to return from England. So for the second time Tanneguy's clumsy zeal did his master harm, and rendered the English King unexpected assistance.

Let us now turn to trace the course of the negotiations which, taking their start from the tragedy at Montereau, ended in the marriage at Troyes. Philip, Count of Charolois, was twenty-three years of age when he became Duke of Burgundy. Young, impulsive, and energetic, his one thought was to take vengeance for his father's murder; with that purpose, he resolved, after a brief delay, to seek an alliance with England. Both the Court at Troyes under the influence of Queen Isabel, and the government at Paris, of which Philip's cousin the Count of St. Pol was the nominal head, made overtures to Henry without waiting for the Duke's decision. On 24th September, English commissioners were appointed to treat with

* She was the Dauphin's sister.

Paris and the French King.* Philip opened negotiations with Henry a few days later, though his policy was not formally determined till a conference which met at Arras on 18th October.

During the next six weeks messengers were passing constantly between Mantes and Arras and Paris. At last, on 2nd December, Philip of Burgundy gave his assent to the proposals made to him by the Earl of Warwick on Henry's behalf. Henry agreed to marry Catherine of France and leave the royal dignity in possession of Charles and Isabel, on the conditions that he should succeed to the crown at the death of Charles, and during the King's lifetime should be Regent; the Estates of France were to swear obedience to him in a prescribed form. Philip, on his part, pledged himself to use all his efforts to secure the acceptance of the proposed terms by the French Court.†

The agreement was reported to Henry at Rouen a few days later. A partial truce had been concluded with the Burgundian governors of Paris after the capture of Poissy and St. Germain, and had since been extended from time to time. A more general truce was the natural sequel to the agreement at Arras, and the preliminary to a more formal treaty. On Christmas Eve Philip Morgan, John Kempe, the Lord FitzHugh, Sir Walter Hungerford, and Sir John Tiptoft, as Henry's representatives, concluded a truce to last till 1st March. It was in effect an offensive and defensive alliance between England

* *Fœdera*, ix., 796, 797; Du Fresne de Beaucourt, i., 185–189.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 816–818.

and Burgundy; for not only were the Dauphin and his supporters expressly excluded, but the troops of either of the two parties were to have access through lands in occupation by the other for the purpose of waging war on their common enemy. On Christmas Day Henry formally ratified the agreement of Arras; he would treat Philip as his own brother so long as they both should live; he would spare no efforts to secure the condign punishment of the Dauphin and his accomplices, and if they fell into his hands would not ransom them without the Duke's assent. The truce was proclaimed at Paris on 31st December, and the treaty ratified by Philip at Arras on 5th January, 1420.*

Between Henry and the French Court there was as yet no formal treaty, and some months were to elapse before the terms were finally settled. But between the English and Burgundians the accord was already complete, and during the spring of 1420 they waged war on the Dauphin in concert. Even in December, 1419, the Earl of Huntingdon and Sir John Cornwall, who then held command on the borders of Vermandois, had joined forces with John of Luxembourg, the Burgundian commander, against the Dauphin's garrison at Compiègne. In January, 1420, they captured Fontaine Lavaganne in the Beauvoisis and overran the whole county of Clermont.† About the same time another force of English, with help from Paris, took Tremblay and Dammartin, and expelled the Dauphin's garrisons

* *Fœdera*, ix., 818–820, 825–827, 840–842.

† Chastelain, i., 98, 103, 106.



THE EARL OF WARWICK AT THE FRENCH COURT.

from Valois. The Earl of Salisbury, who had been sent by Henry to prosecute the war in Maine, in March laid siege to Fresnay-le-Vicomte. The French and Scots under the Maréchal de Rieux marched to its relief; Huntingdon and Cornwall came up in haste to Salisbury's assistance; they encountered de Rieux near Le Mans, defeated him with great slaughter and captured the banner of William Douglas, the Scottish leader.* So whilst the French were divided "did the King of England win daily of them castles and towns and fortresses.†"

Meanwhile the truce had been again and again renewed to give time for the negotiations. In February the Earl of Warwick, accompanied by Sir Gilbert Umfraville, John, Lord Roos of Hamlake, and Sir Louis Robsart, came to Philip of Burgundy at St. Quentin. Warwick was commissioned to go with Philip to the French Court and negotiate the proposed treaty. In Vermandois there were still many fortresses held by the Dauphin's garrisons, and it was at the head of quite an army that Warwick and Burgundy set out for Troyes. Together they took Crépy and other places in the Laonnais, and marching by way of Rheims and Chalons, reached Troyes on 21st March. There they were received with great rejoicing by the French Court. Charles, the unhappy King, was quite incapable and content to agree to whatever was proposed;

* Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 331, where the date 16th May is probably an error for 16th March; cf. *Fœdera*, ix., 885.

† *English Chron.*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 9.

" whether it was to his own hurt or not, it was all one to him." Queen Isabel, whose influence was thus supreme, was more than ever hostile to her son and well pleased to see him ousted for the benefit of her favourite daughter Catherine. Under such auspices the negotiations were easy, and on 9th April Charles was made to put his seal to the preliminaries of the treaty which was to deprive himself of his authority and his son of his inheritance.

The terms did not differ materially from those arranged at Arras in December. Provisions were, however, added on numerous points of detail. Henry undertook to govern as Regent by the advice of a Council chosen from the nobles of Charles VI.'s obedience. He would endeavour to subdue all places that adhered to the so-called Dauphin's or Armagnac party, and especially such as were north of the Loire. At his succession to the throne Normandy and all his other conquests should be reunited to the French Crown. On becoming Regent he would take the oath usual to the kings of France at their coronation, and during Charles's life would cease to use the title of King of France, styling himself only " Henry, King of England and Heir of France." Other minor points were also provided for, and arrangements made for the intended coming of Henry to Troyes. Either Lagny-sur-Marne or Charenton and the towns of Provins and Nogent were to be put in English hands. Each King might be attended by fifteen hundred armed men. Both parties swore to assist one another against any insult or injury during the Conference, and pledged

themselves not to attempt any treachery under cover of the interview.*

It is not to be supposed that such an agreement passed without criticism. At Paris in the previous autumn the citizens had accepted the idea of an English alliance only as the less of two evils, to which they were driven by fear of Armagnac tyranny and vengeance. When the terms became known there were many who found the recognition of the King of England as Regent of France and the putting aside of the Dauphin and the male line of St. Louis highly distasteful.* Some even of the Burgundian party would not acquiesce in such a treaty with the ancient enemy of the Crown and Kingdom of France, thinking it "very marvellous and shameful." On the English side there had been some criticism from another point of view: the recognition of the title of Charles VI. as King of France and the acceptance by Henry of the style of Regent were argued to be an undue concession, which gave away the English right and claim, and made the whole war appear unjust.† Such objections were, however, merely formal; Henry himself was too much of a statesman to make any confusion between the shadow and the substance. For England the treaty was an extraordinary triumph. For France it was, indeed, as Des Ursins called it, marvellous and shameful. Yet its authors were not without excuse for their policy. The advisers of the Dauphin did not understand, and apparently did not wish to

* *Fœdera*, ix., 877–882.

† *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 377, 383, 437. ‡ Goodwin, p. 260.

understand, the interests and necessities of the northern and traditional centre of the French monarchy. Their own ideas were derived from the South, which in the opening years of the fifteenth century was almost as foreign to Paris as England itself. This was at once the source of the Dauphin's weakness and the secret of his eventual strength. The sentiment of French patriotism found its refuge at Bourges; and when Charles VII. at last returned to be King at Paris, it was as the head of a nation that had rid itself in great measure of the old feudal and racial divisions.

Immediately after the conclusion of the preliminaries Warwick and his colleagues left Troyes to report the success of their mission to the English King. About the middle of April Henry set out from Rouen. First he stopped at Mantes, and then went on to Pontoise, where he rested some days whilst his retinue assembled, and Warwick concluded the final arrangements for the meeting at Troyes. On 8th May Henry left Pontoise accompanied by the Dukes of Clarence and Bedford, the Earls of Warwick and Huntingdon, and a force of fifteen hundred men. He marched through St. Denis, and on the following day passed close under the walls of Paris, whence the people gazed in wonder at his splendid escort. At Charenton, where he crossed the Marne, a deputation of the citizens met him with a present of wine. From Provins, on 14th May, he sent a message to the French King to announce his coming. Six days later, as he approached Troyes, he was met by Philip of Burgundy, who

conducted him courteously to the city, one half of which had been set apart for his reception.

On the morrow, Tuesday, 21st May, 1420, the famous Treaty of Troyes was solemnly ratified in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter. Henry was attended by his two brothers, forty nobles, knights and squires, and by the Duchess of Clarence with a train of English ladies. On the French side Queen Isabel and Duke Philip appeared as commissaries for Charles VI., accompanied by the Princess Catherine and an equal retinue. Henry and Isabel met in the middle of the church, and walked side by side up to the High Altar. Then the articles of the treaty were recited, sealed and sworn to by Isabel and Philip in the name of King Charles, and by Henry on his own behalf. Next Henry and Catherine were solemnly betrothed. Finally Philip made his oath in public that he would be obedient to Henry as Regent of France during the lifetime of Charles, and when Charles was dead would become his liege subject. As soon as the ceremony in the Cathedral was over, the Peace was proclaimed and the articles of the Treaty published in either tongue throughout the whole city and in the English host.

In its main terms the Treaty as finally ratified followed the preliminaries arranged in April. Some additions were, however, made. Henry promised to seek from the Estates of France and England a provision to the following effect:

"From the time that we or any of our heirs come to the same, both realms shall be governed not severally, but under one and the same person; keeping none the less,

in all manner other things, to either of the same realms their Rights, or Customs, Usages and Laws. Also that henceforward perpetually shall be still, rest, and shall cease all manner of Dissensions, Hates, Rancours, Enmities and Wars ; and there shall be for ever more and shall follow Peace, Tranquillity, Good Accord and Common Affection, and Stable Friendship and Stedfast between the same Realms."

All three parties to the Treaty bound themselves not to " begin or make with Charles bearing himself for the Dauphin of Vienne, any Treaty of Peace or Accord but of the assent of all and each of us three." *

The new " Great Peace " was proclaimed at Paris with much rejoicing on 30th May, and at London on 14th June, after a solemn procession and sermon at Paul's Cross.

The marriage of Henry and Catherine was celebrated in St. John's Church at Troyes on Trinity Sunday, 2nd of June, about midday, with all solemnity according to the custom of France. The ceremony was performed by Henry de Savoisy, Archbishop of Sens, to whom the King gave thirteen nobles instead of thirteen pence, which were the ordinary dues. The King gave also to the Church two hundred nobles, and everyone of the company gave as his offering three nobles at the altar. And afterwards there was the sup with wine in the accustomed manner, and the blessing of the nuptial couch.†

* *Fœdera*, ix., 895–904 (the treaty in French and Latin), and x., 916–920 (the official English version).

† Des Ursins, p. 557 ; see also Chastelain, i., 134.



THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY V.



# CHAPTER XIX

## THE HEIR OF FRANCE

### 1420–1421

HENRY had at last attained his goal. He had won the bride whom he had sought so long, and as Regent and Heir of France he had apparently secured the position which was the ostensible purpose of his war. Yet he was under no misapprehension as to the magnitude of the task which still lay before him. To the young knights of his company, who wished to celebrate the marriage with jousts and a tourney, he answered that on the morrow they should all start for the city of Sens, where each might have jousts and tourneys to his liking. On Tuesday, 4th June, the English and Burgundians set out from Troyes, marching by way of St. Florentin and Villeneuve-le-Roi. The two queens, Isabel and Catherine, accompanied the army. "So there lay at this Siege many worthy Ladies and Gentlewomen, both French and English*; of the which many of them began the Feats of Arms long

* *Fœdera*, ix., 911. A private letter from one Johan Ofort to a friend in England.

ago, but of lying at Sieges now they begin first." The townsfolk of Sens had no love for their Armagnac garrison, and after a brief resistance asked for terms. Sir John Cornwall, who was sent to parley with them, was met by a French gentleman with an unkempt beard; but he would not parley till the other had his beard trimmed, "for such was not the manner and custom of England." As Henry entered Sens on 11th June, he paid the Archbishop a neat compliment: "You have given me a wife, now I restore you your own—your Church."

From Sens Henry and Philip went on to besiege Montereau, leaving Charles VI. and the two queens to rest at Bray. Montereau was held by a strong garrison of French and Scots under the Sire de Guitry. Shortly after the siege commenced, Henry was reinforced by fresh troops, whom his brother, John of Bedford, brought up from Normandy. On Midsummer Day a party of English and Burgundians without any orders stormed the town. The garrison fled in such confusion to the castle that many were drowned in the attempt to cross the river; some sixteen persons of distinction were taken prisoners. As soon as the allies had occupied Montereau, and Duke Philip had made provision for his father's honourable re-interment, Henry turned his arms against the castle. When the Sire de Guitry refused to surrender, the King had his prisoners all hanged before the gates. Such severity was novel to Henry's warfare; but in his excuse it might be pleaded that the French were now rebels against the lawful Regent. After all de Guitry

surrendered on 1st July, a tame conclusion for which he was much blamed by both parties.

Melun, the Dauphin's stronghold whence his mercenaries had so long threatened Paris, was the next place to be attacked. With its towers that kissed the sky, its deep and wide fosse, its well-built walls and formidable outworks, it was the fortress, if any, to defy Henry with success.* The garrison was strong, and in the Sire de Barbazan it had a brave and skilful commander. So the siege was one of the worst of the war, and lasted through eighteen weeks of fierce and continued fighting. No less than twenty thousand men were mustered before Melun. The young King James of Scotland was brought over from England, in the hope that his presence would influence his countrymen; but the Scots would not recognise the authority of their captive sovereign, nor, in spite of his friendship for Henry, would James attempt to assert it. A more powerful ally who came to Henry's assistance from Germany was his brother-in-law, Louis, the Red Duke of Bavaria.

The siege of Melun began on 13th July. Henry, with his brothers Clarence and Bedford, pitched their tents on the western side. Philip of Burgundy, with the Earls of Warwick and Huntingdon, had their camp on the east. To keep the besieging forces in touch, a bridge was built across the Seine, boats were collected, and the river patrolled. Within a few days Burgundy's men captured a strong outwork after a sharp fight, in the course of which

* Elmham, *Vita*, p. 276.

Sir Philip Leche was slain. Still Henry, with sound judgment, recognised that the siege would be a long one, and made his preparations accordingly. His lines were fortified with trenches and palisades, and his numerous guns set in regular embrasures, whence they kept up a fierce bombardment. The position of the allies was so strong that the Dauphin, who had assembled an army at Château Renard, did not venture to take the field, though his garrisons in neighbouring fortresses harassed the English with frequent skirmishes.*

At the beginning of the siege Henry had taken the two queens and the French King to Corbeil, between Melun and Paris. Since the Treaty of Troyes the English had gone freely to Paris "as oft as they would, without safe-conducts or any letting."† Henry himself seems to have paid several visits to the capital during the early part of the siege, dividing his time between Paris and Corbeil and Melun. Later on, when the blockade was well established, the French Court removed from Corbeil to the camp before Melun. It was hoped that the presence of their King in the besieging host might make the French more ready to seek terms. The unhappy Charles was, however, little regarded and had no such state as became his rank. Henry, on the other hand, had never been so nobly accom-

* Elmham (*Vita*, p. 281) alleges that Burgundy, in constant panic, kept asking for help, which was as often sent, though never needed. His account seems to have been written nearly twenty years later, after Philip had abandoned the English alliance.

† *Fœdera*, ix., 911.

panied and kept his Court with great pomp; outside the royal quarters a band of English clarions and other instruments played every day for an hour both at sunrise and sunset.

Meantime the siege was prosecuted with unabated vigour. Louis of Bavaria, who arrived some time in August, took up his quarters with Philip of Burgundy. Finding how much progress had been made with the bombardment, he urged that the time was ripe for an assault. Philip replied that he had several times suggested it, but the King of England was not of that opinion. Louis then went to Henry, who heard him patiently, but showed how the thing was very perilous and not free from hazard. Still, since Louis was bent on the attempt, he gave his assent, and advised that they should prepare scaling ladders and fascines to fill the fosse; as for himself, he would not fail in his duty when the time came. The result justified the King. For Barbazan, perceiving what was intended, made provision beforehand, so that the Germans and Burgundians on advancing to the assault met with unexpected resistance. A picked body of cross-bowmen manned the walls, whilst the townsfolk poured down boiling fat and showers of stones. As soon as the assailants had entered the fosse and were preparing to scale the walls, Barbazan with a chosen company sallied from a false postern and took them in the rear. Between two fires the besiegers had to beat a retreat with heavy loss. Some called it a mad undertaking; but Henry answered that it was nobly attempted, such feats of war were

praiseworthy, though they could not always be successful.*

Henry on his own side showed that he could be not less valiant than prudent. The English, who had grown skilful in sieges, made mines to sap the walls. Barbazan, not to be outdone, made countermines, and after a while was successful in burning the English works. Henry, whom no failure daunted, encouraged his men to fresh efforts. In spite of every obstacle, constant fighting, and bad weather, the English made fresh mines, though they had to work knee deep in water. The French responded with equal vigour; and, as soon as the miners came to close quarters, Barbazan had barriers prepared and pushed forward to prevent the English advancing through the countermine into the city. So after a time the besieged and besiegers met and had many fierce encounters underground. It was a weird warfare, in which the combatants on either side fought in the narrow mines and exchanged blows by torchlight across the barriers breast-high between them. Foremost among the French was young Louis Juvenal des Ursins. Shortly after the countermine was first pierced Barbazan met his youthful lieutenant fully armed and asked him: "Louis, where are you going?" When Barbazan learnt his purpose he continued: "Brother, you do not yet know what fighting in mines means; give me your axe." Louis did as he was told, and Barbazan cut the handle short; "for mines are sloping,

* We owe this story to Des Ursins (p. 559), whose brother, Louis Juvenal des Ursins, was serving under Barbazan.

tortuous, and narrow, wherefore short handles are very needful." Many young soldiers on either side were anxious to win renown in these meetings, and even the commanders on occasion took part in them.

"It fortuned on a day that there arose a contention betwixt two lords of the King's host, who should have the honour to go first into the mine; so the King (to avoid the strife) entered the mine himself first of all other, and by chance came to fight hand to hand with the lord Barbazan, who was likewise entered the mine before all other of them within the town."

After they had fought a good season together, each of them admiring the valour of the other, they made a pause, and Henry asked his opponent's name. Then said the French lord: "I am Barbazan." "And you," answered Henry, "have fought with the King of England." Whereupon Barbazan, perceiving with whom he had fought, caused the barriers forthwith to be closed, and withdrew into the city; and the King returned back to his camp.*

Neither by escalade nor by mines could the English take the city. But not even the valour of Barbazan could hold out against famine. By the end of October the besieged had spent all their bread, and had nought to eat save horseflesh, "which is a thing that hath little or no nourishment, for men who must be fighting every day." Still Barbazan held out, hoping always for succour, or for some happy chance or quarrel that might compel the

* Holinshed, iii., 122; Goodwin, pp. 278, 279; Chastelain, i., 157.

English and Burgundians to raise the siege. Barbazan's hopes were vain. The Dauphin had lost his most valiant captain by the death in August of Philip, Count of Vertus and brother of the Duke of Orleans; Charles himself was not of the stuff for the field, and preferred his luxurious dalliance at Bourges. So when a last appeal from Melun came in November, the Dauphin answered that he had not the power to raise the siege and Barbazan must make the best terms he could. On 17th November Melun surrendered at discretion. It was, however, understood that all save those who were concerned in the murder of Duke John should be free to depart, on condition that they did not again bear arms against the two kings. A further exception was made for the Scots and any English deserters, who were to be at Henry's mercy.

The deserters and some twenty of the chief Scots got but a short shrift. A few Frenchmen were also executed. The principal nobles and captains to the number of six or seven hundred were sent prisoners to Paris till they had given security for the future. Barbazan himself was for a time in danger. He had been present at Montereau on the fatal 10th of September, though he had no knowledge of the plot and denounced it as a felon act that robbed his master of his honour. Nevertheless, he seems to have owed his life less to his innocence than to the chivalry of the English King, who would not sanction the death of one with whom he had honourably crossed swords.

Henry's treatment of his prisoners both at Mon-

tereau and Melun seems repellent to our notions. Yet he was not wantonly cruel, as were too often his French opponents*; he acted only as he believed that strict justice warranted him to do. In protecting Barbazan he risked a quarrel with Philip of Burgundy, rather than trespass against his own honour and conscience. If, moreover, Henry was severe, he was sternly impartial. There was in his household a Gascon gentleman, Bertrand de Chaumont, who had turned English at Agincourt, and since that time by his valiant conduct won the warm esteem of his master. After the fall of Melun this Bertrand for lucre helped two French squires, who had been parties to the murder of Montereau, to escape. The thing came to the knowledge of Duke Philip, who reported it to the King. Henry, in spite of appeals from his brother Clarence, and from Philip himself, ordered Bertrand to be instantly executed. He would have no traitors in his host; yet though justice must be done for an example to others, he would rather have lost fifty thousand nobles than that Bertrand should have shown him such disloyalty.

By the capture of Melun the Dauphin's supporters were driven from their most dangerous proximity to Paris. The citizens of the capital had long suffered at the hands of the Armagnac soldiery; so his achievement enabled Henry to come more as a deliverer than a conqueror. The Great Peace had

* Like the Bastard of Alençon, who after the sea fight off La Rochelle massacred all his English prisoners in cold blood, as a revenge for his brother who fell at Agincourt.—Des Ursins, p. 556.

indeed been welcomed by the townsfolk of northern France, with "joy and mirth, every holiday in dancing and carolling." * Still, the opposite party had their adherents, and some even of the Burgundians had little liking for the Treaty.

It was probably by reason of rumoured disaffection at Paris that Henry during the siege of Melun had the Bastille, the Maison de Nesle, the Louvre, and Bois de Vincennes put in his hands. One writer states openly that the King did not trust the fidelity of the Burgundian garrisons, and therefore obtained possession of the Bastille by a not very creditable trick. According to this story an English knight was sent with a small company to Paris. Leaving most of his men in hiding, he approached the Bastille and asked for an interview with the Captain. The portcullis was raised and the drawbridge lowered. When the pretended business was concluded the English knight began with much courtesy to take his leave, protesting, after the manner of a high-born noble, that he must do the other the honour to withdraw last. The Frenchman replied with equal ceremony, and whilst they thus bandied compliments the knight contrived to edge his way forward. Meantime the other English had come up unobserved, and as soon as they saw their opportunity rushed across the bridge and through the gate. The knight snatched the keys from the French captain, who, finding himself outwitted and not venturing to use violence, made a virtue of necessity.

* *Fœdera*, ix., 911.

This story, coming from an English writer, who wished to discredit Burgundian loyalty, lacks authenticity.* Nevertheless, there was probably some friction between the English and their allies, if not between Philip and Henry himself. The Prince of Orange had left the host before Melun rather than swear fealty to the King of England. Even John of Luxembourg, who was Burgundy's cousin, at first refused to accept the Treaty, and only gave way at Philip's urgent request. Another captain of the party who fell out with the English was the Sire de l'Isle Adam, then Marshal of France. L'Isle Adam during the siege of Melun attended the King one day on some business touching his office, dressed in a grey riding-suit. "What! L'Isle Adam," said Henry in jest, "is this the costume of the Marshal of France?" L'Isle Adam, who was nothing of a courtier, looked him in the face and answered: "Sire, I put it on to come by boat across the Seine." There was probably some studied insolence in his manner, for Henry asked him angrily: "How dare you thus look a prince in the face when you speak to him?" "'Tis the French custom," retorted L'Isle Adam, "not to address any man, whatever his estate, with a downcast countenance." "It is not ours," replied Henry and turned away. The King may well have

* Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 282–284. The narrative was no doubt written after Philip had abandoned the English alliance. The English were in possession of the Bastille before 7th September. Cf. *Norman Rolls*, ap. *Forty-second Report Deputy-Keeper*, p. 307. See also Chastelain, i., 161, etc.

felt little liking for the man who had made a fortune by the Armagnac massacres, and for the sake of it failed in his duty at Pontoise. Whatever the reason, L'Isle Adam incurred Henry's displeasure, and lost his office of Marshal, and before long his liberty also. L'Isle Adam's case was not peculiar, for one by one as occasion offered other officers whose loyalty was doubtful were removed from their posts.*

On the 1st December Henry made his state entry into Paris. The streets were hung with rich draperies, and at every crossing the citizens welcomed him with shouts of "Noel!" Henry rode at the head of the procession with the King of France on his right and the Duke of Burgundy on his left. At intervals they were met by monks and priests bearing sacred relics from the churches. Charles signed to Henry that he should be the first to kiss the relics. Henry doffed his hat and with a low reverence gave place to the French King. And so they did all the way till they came to Nôtre Dame, where they made their offering before the High Altar. Then the two Kings remounted and rode away, Charles to the Hotel de St. Pol, and Henry with his brothers to the Louvre.

Next day the two Queens entered with like ceremony amid great rejoicing; and all that day and the following night the fountains at the crossroads ran with wine.

So the two Courts kept Christmas at Paris, but in very different fashion. For Charles was humbly

* Chastelain, i., 162, 179; Monstrelet, p. 491.

lodged, and few came to do him reverence save some old servants and men of low estate. But no one could describe sufficiently the pomp and pageantry in which Henry and Catherine held festival at the Louvre. Their Court was of regal magnificence, and in all things Henry acted as though he were really sovereign, removing and appointing officers at his pleasure. Early in December the Estates of France had been assembled for the ceremonial ratification of the Peace, the two Kings presiding in equal state. Afterwards there had been a grand "Bed of Justice," when Burgundy, supported by the Dukes of Clarence and Bedford, appeared before Charles and Henry, and through his orator charged the so-called Dauphin of Vienne and his chief supporters with having wickedly and falsely slain his father. After a formal trial the accused were declared guilty of treason, and by royal letters patent adjudged incapable of succeeding to any property or exercising any rights, dignities, or prerogatives.

After the Christmas feast was over the princes dispersed. Henry had been absent from England more than three years; and now in response to an urgent appeal from the Parliament, he proposed to revisit his ancestral kingdom and take his Queen to be crowned at Westminster. On 27th December, accompanied by Catherine and his brothers, he left Paris and four days later entered Rouen. In the Norman capital Henry spent nearly three weeks, and with his Queen kept open feast on Twelfth Night. Immediately afterwards there was a great

Parliament of the Estates of Normandy, wherein a subsidy was voted and ordinances passed for the promotion of better government. At this Parliament Arthur de Richemont did homage to Henry for the Earldom of Ivry; he had been present under a species of parole at Melun, and now his liberty was further enlarged in the hope that he would bring over Brittany to the English side. There came also at this time from Gascony representatives of Charles d'Albret and the Count of Foix, who had quarrelled with the Dauphin; but though they promised fealty to Henry, they proved no more faithful to him than they had been to their French lord.

On 19th January Henry left Rouen and two days later entered Amiens,* whence he proceeded to Calais, by way of Doullens, St. Pol, and Terouanne, close by the field of Agincourt. Before he left Rouen Henry appointed his brother Thomas of Clarence to be his Lieutenant in France and Normandy. The Duke of Exeter had been made Governor of Paris, and Sir Gilbert Umfraville Marshal of France. John of Bedford, with the young King of Scots, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Earls of March and Warwick, returned with the King to England. At Calais Henry was royally received by the merchants and townsfolk, who were proud to be the first of his native subjects to welcome their Queen. On 1st February he crossed the Channel, having been in France exactly three years and six months.

* Monstrelet, p. 496.



# CHAPTER XX

## THE STATE OF ENGLAND

DURING the King's long absence England under the rule of Bedford was quietly and peaceably governed. A firm administration at home and a successful foreign policy had so appeased the various elements of discontent that the Regent found himself confronted by few questions of serious difficulty. The Lollard movement was passing out of its political phase and resuming gradually its more purely religious aspect. Henry's strong hand in the State, and the temperate and national policy with which Chichele under the King's direction governed the Church, were of sure and steady effect. Oldcastle's intrigues served for a time to keep the embers alive, and as long as he remained at large the attitude of the royal government was one of watchful anxiety.

The circumstances which had driven the Lollard leader into a course of political treason made any retreat impossible. After the abortive attempt at St. Giles's Fields Oldcastle was formally outlawed, and a price of one thousand marks was put upon his head. He seems to have found a hiding-place in

his native county, and for nearly four years evaded successfully all attempts to capture him. In Herefordshire Lollardy was strong; there were many adherents of the claims of Mortimer, and perhaps not a few secret sympathisers with the rebel Welsh.* In his adversity the once loyal servant of the House of Lancaster made friends with all who resisted the established dynasty. That he intrigued with the Scots and the pseudo-king Richard there seems to be little doubt; it is therefore the more probable that he was somehow privy to the Scrope and Cambridge plot of July, 1415. With the collapse of that treason Oldcastle disappared as mysteriously as before. But neither he nor his more extreme adherents abandoned their intrigues; and there was certainly some fresh scheme afoot a year later. In September, 1416, one Benedict Wolman, a "grete Lollard," was executed at London as a traitor for having sent to Sigismund a paper in favour of the pseudo-Richard.† At Christmas there was discovered a plot to have taken the King's life at Kenilworth. Fresh proclamations followed for the capture of Oldcastle, the "Lollard of Lollards"; and Thomas Payne, who was his clerk and counsellor, was arrested on the charge of having attempted to carry off King James of Scotland from Windsor.‡

* John Kent, the Welsh bard and "magician," was connected traditionally not only with Glendower, but also with Oldcastle. Chastelain (i., 338) seems to imply that the Welsh rebellion and Lollard movement were popularly supposed to have some connection.

† Riley, *Memorials of London*, p. 638; *Chron. London*, p. 104.

‡ Ramsay, i., 254, 255; Palgrave, *Antient Kalendars and Inventories*, ii., 102.

It was now also that the famous English Hussite, Peter Payne, fled to Bohemia, whether to escape martyrdom, or, as his enemies alleged, through a charge of treason.* Oldcastle himself is alleged to have instigated the "Foul Raid" of the Scots, who in October, 1417, invaded England, but were ignominiously repulsed by the Duke of Exeter, who was then in Yorkshire, raising troops for the French war.

It was not long after the "Foul Raid" that the Lord Powys' men got news of Oldcastle's hiding-place in Montgomeryshire. But Oldcastle was only captured after a desperate struggle, for he "stood at great defence long time and was sore wounded ere he would be taken." His injuries were so serious that he had to be carried to London in a "whirlicote," or horse-litter. † By Bedford's orders he was, on 14th December, brought before the Parliament which was then in session. The records of his outlawry and conviction for heresy were formally produced, and upon these he was without further trial condemned. The same day he was taken back to the Tower and drawn through the city on a hurdle to St. Giles's Fields, where he was hung and afterwards burnt, gallows and all.‡

Oldcastle was an enthusiast of fine quality, whom

* See *Dict. National Biography*, xliv., 114. Peter played a great part in the Hussite movement for nearly forty years. At Basle in 1433 he was accused of having misled Oldcastle. He had been principal of St. Edmund Hall at Oxford till 1414.

† *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 7.

‡ *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 108; the official record does not imply that he was burnt alive.

an unhappy destiny converted into a traitor. He died a martyr, but it is impossible not to recognise that his political conduct in his last days had made leniency impossible. Four years previously the King would have saved him if he could; we may conjecture that Henry was not sorry to avoid through his absence in France any direct concern in the fate of his old comrade in arms.

After Oldcastle's death we hear no more of domestic sedition. The other political troubles of the Government were due to the complications of the war. The presence of French princes as prisoners in England was a cause of no little anxiety. Orleans especially found opportunity to intrigue with the Scots and with his friends in France. In the autumn of 1417 Henry wrote home that he had secret information of a threatened plot:

"There hath been a man of the Duke of Orleans in Scotland and accorded with the Duke of Albany that he shall bring the mammet of Scotland to stir what he may. . . . Wherefore I will that the Duke be kept still within the castle of Pomfret; for it is better he lack his disport than we be deceived."*

Two years later, after the murder at Montereau, when the escape of the princes "might never have been so harmful nor prejudicial to us as it might be now if any of them escaped, and namely the said Duke of Orleans," Henry wrote to Langley, the Chancellor, that as good heed should be taken unto

* Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Series, i., 1.

the sure keeping of the Duke's person as possible.* After the Treaty of Troyes Arthur de Richemont and the Duke of Bourbon were released upon conditions, but Orleans was kept a prisoner in England nearly twenty years longer.

Probably the danger of intrigue with the King's enemies in France furnishes also the explanation of a mysterious affair which befell in 1419. The Queen Dowager Joanna, mother of John of Brittany and of Arthur de Richemont, was accused on the confession of one Friar Randolph, her chaplain, of having "compassed and imagined the King's death in the most horrible manner that could be devised."† In the popular Chronicles the charge is one of "sorcerye and nigramancye," practised by Randolph at the Queen's exciting. Randolph fled oversea, but was captured in Guernsey and brought to Henry at Mantes; thence he was sent to the Tower of London, where some years later he was killed by the parson of the Tower in a quarrel. Poor Joanna lost her estates, and for three years was under arrest at Pevensey; but shortly before his death, on 13th July, 1422, Henry ordered her release.‡ A little light is thrown on the matter by a statement that Henry V. had "banished the strangers about Queen Joanna, who gave information to the enemy and

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* *Fœdera*, ix., 801.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 118.

‡ *Chron. London*, p. 107; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 331; *English Chronicle* Harley MS., 2256, ff. 193, 194. The date of the "plot" would seem to be May, 1419, for Randolph was captured at Whitsuntide.

carried much treasure out of the country." * It is possible that Joanna or her attendants may have corresponded too freely with the Breton Duke, whose attitude in French politics was always a source of anxiety to Henry V.

On turning to review the social state of England we are struck at once by the meagre references in contemporary chronicles. Perhaps it is fair to assume that this silence is the best proof that the country was on the whole contented and prosperous. During Henry's second absence three Parliaments were held in his name; the first two by Bedford in November–December, 1417, and October, 1419; the third by Gloucester in December, 1420. In the first two there was no legislation of constitutional importance, and in the third such matters as were decided had reference to the King's new position as ruler of France. A Parliament summoned by the Lieutenant in the King's absence was not to be dissolved by his return; if the King was out of England petitions were not to be engrossed until they had been sent oversea for the royal assent; the statute for securing English liberties, which had been passed at the time when Edward III. assumed the title of King of France, was solemnly re-enacted. But in this, as in other Parliaments of the reign, the chief concern of the Commons was for the regulation of commerce, the promotion of internal navigation, the safeguarding of the seas, the improvement of the coinage. All this bears witness to the growth of industry and to

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 306.

the recognition by the Government of the increasing importance of commercial questions. The burgesses of the towns "were in fact the guardians of English wealth, and the arbiters of English politics." *

On the other hand, there is little legislation that touches agriculture. In the first Parliament of 1414 we have an enactment for re-enforcing the Statute of Labourers. Otherwise the only petitions inspired directly by the county members are one, in 1417, against the evil-disposed persons, "probably Lollards, traitors, and rebels," who did much mischief by the frequent breaking of parks, forests, and chaces; and another two years later on the annoyance caused by Sunday poaching during the time of divine service.† Of lawless violence, whether in town or country, which a generation later was only too common, we hear little.‡

Proceedings in Parliament do but reflect the great change that was taking place in English life. In the time of Edward III. England was still chiefly an agricultural and producing country, and the customs on the export of wool were the mainstay of English finance. At the beginning of the fifteenth century England was becoming a manufacturing country. Corn lands were turned into sheep pastures, but the wool trade steadily declined; on the other hand, cloth was manufactured in such quantities

* Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, i., 12.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 20, 114, 122.

‡ An almost solitary instance is the complaint in 1416 that Richard Oldcastle (a cousin of Sir John) had seized Robert Whittington (Sir Richard's brother) near Hereford, and held him to ransom.—*Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 99.

that it became in its turn one of the principal English exports. The chief cloth-works were in the eastern counties and in London; but there were others in the West, in Devon, Dorset, Somerset, and Gloucester.

With the development of industry wealth grew apace, and there came into existence a class of native capitalists who gathered into their own hands more and more of the business of the country. A hundred years before even internal trade had been to a great extent in the hands of aliens; at the beginning of the fifteenth century native merchants were competing with foreigners for a share of the caryring trade by sea. This meant the development of English shipping, and the growth not only of places like Hull and Bristol and London, but of every little town along the south and east coasts from Fowey and Dartmouth to Lynn and Boston.* In the reign of Richard II. English shipmen

> "Knew wel alle the havenes, as thei were,
> From Gootland to the cape of Fynystere,
> And every cryke in Bretayne and in Spayne." †

In 1392, three hundred English vessels cleared from Danzig, and eight years later thirty-eight English ships sailed from Bristol for Ireland, Gascony, and Brittany.‡

The seas, however, were ill-kept, and there was

* Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, i., 373, 3rd ed.

† Chaucer, *Prologue*, 407–409.

‡ Wylie, i., 56, ii., 74.

no clear line between piracy and peaceful trade. So it is difficult to know whether men like John Haule of Dartmouth and Harry Pay of Poole were more corsairs or merchants. Piracy brought no ill-repute, and John Longe of Rye, when he was not plundering on the high seas, represented his native town in Parliament. However, the English were no worse than other nations,—Spaniards, Bretons, French, Flemings, and Scots. Such a condition of affairs was obviously ruinous to trade, and the evil did not escape the English Government. The chief aim of English commercial policy during the reign of Henry IV. was to establish better relations with foreign powers, and especially with the Hanse, the Flemings, and Brittany. A vigorous and on the whole not unsuccessful endeavour was made to put down English piracy, and there was not a Parliament in the reign of Henry V. in which stress was not laid on the need for safe keeping of the seas.

In 1414, it was ordained that an oath should be taken of the captain of every vessel before sailing, that he would attempt nothing against those who were subject to the King's truces and safe-conducts.* This general law was followed by repeated orders for the repression of acts of piracy committed by English, Bretons, Flemings, and others. Sir Thomas Carew, when he was captain at sea in February, 1415, had special orders to stop plundering, whether by Englishmen or foreigners. For the protection of English merchants it was the duty of the Admiral to see that the ships going to Gascony

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 22, 23.

did not sail singly, but in company.* Still it was impossible to suppress piracy altogether. In 1416, the *Christopher* of Hull was chosen admiral of the fleet returning from Bordeaux; but on the way home the fleet was attacked by certain carracks of the enemy, and the *Christopher* being deserted by her fellows was captured. The English did not always get the worst of it; in the first year of the reign eight ships of Dartmouth and London, when bringing home Clarence's troops from Gascony, were assailed by two "hulks of Pruce," but they captured their aggressors and brought them prizes to Southampton.†

It would be going too far to ascribe a purely commercial basis to Henry's war. Yet a French contemporary some years later alleged that the wars of the English were in reality waged against the merchants of France, Spain, Denmark, and Scotland.‡ Moreover, commercial considerations did in a marked degree affect Henry V.'s diplomatic and military combinations. He was careful to conciliate the Hanse, and to secure the neutrality of Brittany; even when Burgundy was counted his full enemy the truce between Flanders and England for fishers, pilgrims, and merchants still subsisted. If it was the pressure of the French war that made maritime supremacy an object of English policy, the importance of good order on the high seas was not lost sight of. If the building of "the great dromons" was in the

* *Fœdera*, ix., 47, 115, 116, 202.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 12, 85.

‡ *Heralds' Debate*, p. 49.

first place intended to make the English navy a match for the Spaniards and Genoese, it served also to encourage the improvement of English shipping. As a result the English boasted that they were more richly and amply provided at sea with fine and powerful ships than any other nation of Christendom, and called themselves kings of the sea.*

Besides cloth and wool the chief English exports were leather, hides, fish, lead from Derbyshire, and tin from Cornwall; coal was extensively worked and considerable quantities were shipped abroad; there were also some iron mines, but the English iron was considered inferior to that from Biscay. In return the merchants of Hull and the east-coast ports brought furs and timber (especially yew for bow-staves) from the Baltic. The merchants of Bristol and the southern ports traded with their cloths to Brittany, Gascony, and Spain, and brought back salt and wine and iron. Others went farther afield; and in spite of Danish opposition the men of Scarborough sent a fleet every year to fish off Iceland. In December, 1414, the *Katrine Benet*, of Dartmouth, when on her way home from Algarve in Portugal, with wax, oil, wine, and fruit, was seized by the Bretons. As yet but few English traders had reached the Mediterranean, but every

* *Heralds' Debate*, p. 17. If, as seems probable, *The Heralds' Debate* was written by Charles of Orleans, the description of England which it contains would belong to the period of his captivity, 1415–1440. The actual date of composition was 1458, by which time the condition of England and English commerce had changed for the worse. The English at Constance in 1416 claimed the kingdom of the sea. See p. 266 above.

year Italian fleets came to England. Their goods were for the most part articles of luxury:

"The grete galees of Venees and Florence
Be wel ladene wyth thynges of complacence,
Alle spicerye, and of grocers ware,
Wyth swete wynes, alle manere of chaffare,
Apes and japes and marmosettes taylede,
Trifles, trifles that litelle have availede.
. . . . . .
Thus these galeise for this lykynge ware,
And etynge ware, bere hens our best chaffare,
Clothe, wolle, and tynne." *

The exchange seemed to the writer to be a bad one. But the balance of trade nevertheless went in favour of England, and accomplished what unaided legislation would not have done; for it secured a sufficient circulation of coined money, which, in the dearth of precious metals, was a difficult matter with mediæval statesmen. So, said "the English Herald," there was not considering the size of England so rich a country in Christendom.†

Perhaps what most impressed the foreign observer in the fifteenth century, as it does the zealous investigator in our own time, was the freedom and independence of English town life. Each borough was in fact a free, self-governing community; and within its own narrow borders was teaching its citizens those lessons of organisation

* *Libelle of Englysh Policye*, *ap. Political Songs*, ii., 173.

† *Heralds' Debate*, p. 65. We may compare the opinion of Sigismund, see p. 175 above.

and self-help which were to prove the foundation of English greatness.* The middle class, which has been for centuries so distinctive of England, had already come into existence; "it is wonderful," says the Herald, "what a fine and abundant population there is in England consisting of churchmen, nobles, and craftsmen, as well as common people."† Sir John Fortescue, in the middle of the fifteenth century, contrasts the poorly fed, ill-clothed folk in France, who "go crooked and be feeble, not able to fight nor to defend the realm," with his prosperous fellow-countrymen. "Blessed be God this land is ruled under a better law; and therefore the people thereof be not in such penury, nor thereby hurt in their persons, but they be wealthy and have all things necessary to the sustenance of nature."‡ So also wrote Philip de Comines: "In my opinion, of all the countries in Europe where I was ever acquainted, the government is nowhere so well managed, the people nowhere less exposed to violence and oppression than in England."§ This was the strength of England, that her people understood the art of self-government, and that her rulers had the wisdom to value rightly the friendship of the commercial class. In the Parliaments of Henry V. the burgesses of the towns were the foremost representatives of national feeling, and King and Commons worked together in mutual

* Green, *Town Life*, ch. i.

† *Heralds' Debate*, p. 61.

‡ *Governance of England*, pp. 114, 115.

§ *Memoirs*, v., c. 18.

self-confidence. It was to the Mayor and Aldermen of London that Henry reported the continued successes of his arms in France. Between the King and the citizens of his capital there was such an exchange of favour and good-will as it would be difficult to match abroad.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century London was the wealthiest city of Western Europe.* If the King was in need of money the citizens of the capital advanced him more than all the other towns of England put together.† To the poll tax of 1379 the Mayor of London was assessed at £4 like an earl or bishop. With wealth there came power, and the great merchants of the capital were of little less consequence than the nobles with whom they consorted on almost equal terms. In the reign of Richard II. the son of a Hull and London merchant had become Earl of Suffolk and Chancellor of England. In the reign of Henry V. we have Sir Thomas Knolles, ancestor of the Earls of Banbury, and Sir Robert Chichele, who was brother to the Archbishop of Canterbury; Knolles and Chichele had both sprung from the prosperous class of country yeomen. Others, like Sir William Sevenoke, who was Mayor in 1418, were men of the humblest origin;

* The populatlon was perhaps 50, 000. We can hardly credit the statement that 30,000 people died of the plague in London in 1406. *Cf.* Wylie, iii., 111, 413.

† In 1397, in 1412, and in 1415 the London merchants lent 10,000 marks. In the complete list for 1397 the other towns contributed together 7522½ marks. See Cunningham, *English Industry and Commerce*, i., 385. The contributions of the smaller towns vary; in 1397, Bristol was second with 1200 marks.




LONDON IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

others again, like the famous Richard Whittington, were men of gentle birth.

Whittington himself, as the most celebrated English merchant of the Middle Ages, deserves more than a passing mention. His father, Sir William Whittington of Pauntley, in Gloucestershire, died in 1360, and Richard, being a younger son, was sent to seek his fortune in London. There, if we may trust the legend, he became an apprentice of Sir John (or Ivo) Fitzwarren, a friend and perhaps a kinsman of his mother's family. When Richard grew to manhood he married his master's daughter, and succeeded him in his business as a Mercer and Merchant Adventurer.* He was still young, but already wealthy, when, in 1393, he was chosen Alderman and served as Sheriff. Five years later he became Mayor, and thus held office at the time of the revolution of 1399. Throughout his life he continued a loyal supporter of the House of Lancaster, and was the trusted financial agent both of Henry IV. and Henry V. Time after time he advanced large sums of money for the King's service.† According to the popular story he entertained Henry and Catherine with princely luxury, and after the feast produced bonds for money lent to the King, which he had taken up and discharged, to the amount of £60,000 sterling; all these out of splendid patriotism he

* However, as an historical person, Sir Ivo Fitzwaryn appears only as a wealthy landowner in Devon and Dorset.

† In 1406, £4621; in 1407, £1000; in 1408, £2833; in 1413, £1000; in 1415, 700 marks, and so on. Wylie, ii., 416, iii., 65, 256, iv., 103; *Fœdera*, ix., 310.

burnt as a compliment to his royal guests. Whittington was Mayor for the third time in 1419; and when he died, in 1423, left the whole of his vast fortune to charitable purposes. It is not surprising that he should have been styled "the sunne of marchaundy, that lode-starre and chief chosen flower." No prince of commerce has ever become the hero of so many myths and legends:

> "That pen and paper may not me suffice
> Him to describe, so high he was of price."*

The commercial prosperity of the country was by no means confined to London. Bristol and Norwich came next, as they still did three centuries later. Most of the flourishing towns were seaports like Dartmouth and Lynn, or places easily reached from the sea like Exeter and York. But there were some inland towns of wealth and importance like Coventry, and many "such great and populous villages that if only they were enclosed within walls they might be called great towns."† In spite, too, of the agricultural disturbance caused by the change from wheat growing to sheep grazing there was an abundance of wealth in the rural districts, and many a franklin lived in such plenty,

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* *Political Songs*, ii., 178. The story of the cat is a myth common to the folk-lore of many countries; it attached itself to Whittington during the sixteenth century. The legend of Bow Bells is about as old and as baseless.

† *Heralds' Debate*, p. 61. The French Herald retorted that in France there were more than a dozen walled towns for one in England. An unintended witness to the more peaceful lot of England.

"Hit snewede in his hous of mete and drynke."*

Even a generation later Sir John Fortescue † described how almost every small village had its knight or squire or franklin; and the general prosperity was not less, before the long war had drained the resources of the country.

The French Herald might boast of the numerous fine castles, the great open chaces and forests of his own country; but we shall find the English representative better justified by his many simple manor houses, the wide expanse of cultivated lands, which left little room for forests, the enclosed parks and pleasure grounds, the abundant stock of oxen, cows, swine, and horses, and the flocks of sheep "which produced the finest and choicest wool that can be found anywhere." ‡ At one point France had the advantage: there was little fruit grown in England, except in Kent, and that was ill-flavoured; there was, says the French Herald, sarcastically, a fine garden at Cheap Cross in London, but all the fruit in it came from Flanders or Normandy.§

No doubt there was another side to this picture, and in spite of good government and commercial development there were in the England of Henry V. many elements of distress. Such elements are inevitable in any period of social and industrial change; but our own age affords sufficient evidence

* Chaucer, *Prologue*, 345.

† *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, c. 29.

‡ *Heralds' Debate*, pp. 6, 10, 61, 75.

§ *Id.*, 279. The Fruit Market was in Cheapside.

that agricultural depression, and trade disturbances pressing hardly in some particular direction, are not inconsistent with great general prosperity.* The reign of Henry V. forms a happy break between two periods of social disorder. The evil effects of the Black Death and the first French wars were passing away, and the renewed warfare had not as yet overtaxed the resources of the nation. The troubles of the reign of Richard II. may be put down to an ill-managed foreign war, the factious strife of an oligarchical nobility, and the corruption of a denationalised Church. The heart of the nation was, however, sound, and Henry's government had gone far to correct the evils of the past. His successful conduct of the war, and his skilful diplomacy, by restoring English prestige and maritime supremacy, fostered commerce. His personality commanded the obedience of the nobles, whilst his great schemes furnished a sufficient scope for their ambitions. His ecclesiastical policy, at once orthodox and patriotic, restored to the Church for the time somewhat of her national position. The first effects of a victorious war are generally stimulating, and probably Henry's soldiers brought home as much wealth as did their grandsires, in whose time there was no household of position which could not display a share of the plunder of Normandy.† But the drain of money and men was already beginning to tell. The financial

* Mr. Denton, in his *England in the Fifteenth Century*, takes a gloomy view. I question whether it is not altogether too gloomy, but in any case it is applicable rather to the England of Edward IV. than to that of Henry V. † Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, i. 272.

difficulty might be met for the time by various expedients: by loans from English capitalists,* by the taxation of the conquered provinces, and perhaps most commonly of all by leaving claims to run unpaid. † Nothing could supply the lack of men; England could not make good the waste of war and disease, let alone supply the reinforcements which the constantly extending sphere of operations made necessary. The strain was felt as early as March, 1419, when, in consequence of an appeal from the King, the Council in England issued letters of privy seal to the various counties for the enlistment of fresh troops. The commissioners in Norfolk replied that they had communed with many persons according to their instructions. "Truly, what for poverty and certain infirmities of many of them, we cannot get one that will with his good will go; for a reasonable cause is that those persons of this shire that most be able are over in service of our sovereign lord." ‡ Henry himself was keenly alive to the

* See above, pp. 118, 336. The loans from London merchants were generally for short periods. But the Bishop of Winchester, who in 1416 advanced £14,000, had to wait years.

† Like those of the Earl of Huntingdon, who was owed £8000 for the campaign of Agincourt, but could not raise money for his ransom after Baugé.

‡ Nicolas, *Proc. Privy Council*, ii., 246; Goodwin, p. 214. See also a letter of Robert Waterton in 1420, ap. *Fœdera*, ix., 883, and the statement of the Cardinal of St. Mark in December, 1419, that the English were hard pressed for men and money, ap. Du Fresne de Beaucourt, i., 329. At a moderate estimate there must have been in all 20,000 English abroad. And this does not allow for the troops on the Welsh and Scottish Marches, and in garrison at Calais. The population of the country was only about two and a half millions.

dangers of his position; and it was for this reason that he was so anxious to find effective allies on the Continent.

Still, in spite of the growing burdens of war, the last years of the reign of Henry V. were probably the happiest for England during the whole of the fifteenth century. It was no servile flattery with which the citizens of London addressed the King in September, 1419, and what was true of the capital was true no doubt of the whole country.

"Thank God lowly that ever He sent us so gracious and so virtuous a sovereign lord to reign and have lordship over us. If it like your sovereign highness to hear of the estate of your city of London, please it your kingly majesty to conceive that in more quiet nor peaceable rest, as far forth as absence of you that are our most gracious and sovereign lord may suffer, never was earthly city nor place; blessed be God!"*

* Delpit, p. 228.

# CHAPTER XXI

## HENRY IN ENGLAND

### 1421

IT was out of pure affection, rather than from any political necessity, that the Commons made one of their first petitions in the Parliament of December, 1420, a prayer that the King "with the gracious Lady his Companion would shortly return and visit this realm." Henry assented to their request in a like spirit, and the few short months that he spent in his native kingdom were devoted more to pageants and progresses than to affairs of state.

Henry and Catherine reached Dover on Candlemas Day in the morning. When the royal ship neared the shore the worthy Barons of the Cinque Ports, carried away by their enthusiasm and forgetful of their fine holiday attire, waded through the breakers in eager rivalry for the honour of carrying their sovereign and his bride on their shoulders to the land. Great numbers of people of all classes had assembled at Dover to welcome the King, and the knights and gentry of Kent were there in good array to form a royal escort. So they brought the King and Queen to Canterbury, where they were

worthily received by much people, and did not leave them till they had reached the royal manor of Eltham on the very border of the county.

Henry desired that Catherine should not enter London until all things were ready for her reception in state. He made his own entry beforehand, on St. Valentine's Day. It was just a week later that Catherine came from Eltham, and was met on Blackheath by a great company of the citizens in white cloaks with red hoods and capes. The men of every craft were distinguished "by a diversity on their garments"; they all rode on horseback, and they had brought with them "clarions and all other loud minstrelsies in honour and comfort of the King and his Queen and the glorious and royal sight of strangers that came with them from over-sea." * The pageants and decorations in the streets rivalled those of five years previous; triumphal arches and castles, bands of singing boys and maidens, fountains running with wine, giants of a huge stature ingeniously constructed to bow at the right moment, lions which could roll their eyes and make other appropriate gestures, were all prepared for the welcome of Catherine to the capital of her husband's kingdom.†

Catherine, as was fitting, spent her first night in London at the Tower. Next morning, being the eve of the day appointed for the Queen's coronation, the Mayor, Aldermen, and craftsmen, in their best clothing, with all their melodies and minstrelsies,

* *English Chronicle*, Harley MS., 2256, f. 195.

† Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 297, 298.

went on foot to bring Catherine through the city.

"And they showed to her all the royalty of sights that might be done to her comfort and pleasure, and every street richly hung with cloth of gold and silks and velvets and cloth of Arras the best that might be got. So they brought her through the city to the King's palace at Westminster." *

On Sunday, 23rd February, Catherine was crowned in the Abbey, and afterwards held her solemn feast as Queen in the Hall. It was the season of Lent, so the banquet consisted entirely of fish except that a collar of brawn was served in the first course. Etiquette did not permit the King to be present at the Queen's coronation feast. Catherine sat by herself; on her right were the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Winchester, and on her left was King James of Scotland. The great officers of state performed their accustomed services; Humphrey of Gloucester, as Overseer, stood before the Queen bareheaded, and the Earl of Worcester, acting as Marshal, rode up and down the Hall to keep order. The Barons of the Cinque Ports, the Vouchers of the Chancery, the Mayor and Aldermen of London, the Bishops, and lords and ladies of the Court were all ranged in their proper order of precedence.†

* *English Chronicle*, Harley MS., 2256, f. 195.

† The full programme of the dinner, with its three courses and "subtilties," has been preserved. Perhaps it is enough to quote "the servyce at the first Course":

"Brawne with mustarde. Dedel in Borneux. Furmente with baleyne. Pike. Lamprey powdred. Great Elis poudred. Trought.

After the festivities of the Queen's coronation were over, Henry left London for a progress through the provinces. First by himself he visited the counties of the Welsh border. On 4th March he was at Shrewsbury; on the 7th at Weobly, and on the 15th at Coventry. On the 19th he reached Leicester, where Catherine met him, and the King and Queen kept Easter in the old palace of the Earls of Lancaster. From Leicester they went on to York, where they were received with great honour by the citizens and clergy of the northern capital. Whilst Catherine visited her cousin, Charles of Orleans, at Pontefract, the King went on a sort of pilgrimage to the shrines of St. John of Bridlington, the pretended prophet of Lancastrian prosperity, and of St. John of Beverley, on the feast of whose Translation the victory of Agincourt was won. Henry was thus engaged when there came the news of the greatest disaster that had yet befallen the English in France.

Before he left Normandy the King had arranged that his brother Thomas of Clarence should take the field early in the spring to reopen the war in Maine and Anjou. Clarence's first operations were

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Codlyng. Plaies and merlyne fried. Crabbes great. Lech lumbarde florisshid with colars of esses and brome coddes of Gold in a Target with the armes of the Kyng and the Quene departid. Jarves. A Sotelte, callid a pellican on hire nest with briddis and an ymage of Seint Katerine with a whele in hire hande disputyng with the Hethen clerks, having this Reason in hir hande MADAME LA ROIGNE; the Pellican answeryng CEST ENSEIGNE; the briddes answeryng EST DU ROY PUR TENIR JOIE. A TOUT GENT IL MET SENTENT."—*Chron. London*, p. 164.

entirely successful, and by Good Friday (21st March) he was at Beaufort-en-Vallée near the Loire with a strong body of troops. On that same day the French and Scots, under the Earl of Buchan, reached Baugé, which was a little in the rear of the English position. Next day Clarence learned from his scouts how close the enemy were, and though it was already late in the afternoon, determined on an immediate attack. In spite of the remonstrances of Huntingdon, who urged him at least to wait till his full force was assembled, Clarence started in haste with a small troop of cavalry. When he was near Baugé, Sir Gilbert Umfraville came up with only five horsemen, and in his turn begged the Duke to be prudent; it was better to "keep the Church and God's service," and after the Easter feast to seek the enemy on more favourable terms. Clarence, in childish impatience, taunted Umfraville with having got so much worship that he grudged others their fame: "If thou art afraid, go home, and keep the Church." "Nay, my Lord," answered Umfraville, "you have no company to fight; see, my cousin Grey and I have but ten men with us and no more; yet you shall never say that we thus left you." So they rode on together, chiding by the way, till they came to Baugé, crossed the bridge, and drove in the Scottish outposts. Off went the main body of the English in hot pursuit, leaving the Duke with only a few personal attendants. Suddenly the enemy appeared in force from behind some rising ground; down they charged on Clarence and his little company, and cut them to pieces

before help could arrive. The Duke himself was slain; so also were Umfraville, Sir John Grey of Tankerville, Lord Roos of Hamlake, and half a score of knights. Huntingdon, the Earl of Somerset and his brother Edmund, the Lord FitzWalter, and many others were taken prisoners. The skirmish, for it was no more, was hardly over when the Earl of Salisbury came up with the English archers, drove off the Scots and French, and rescued the bodies of the dead. It was a pitiful blunder, due entirely to the rashness of Clarence and his over-anxiety to perform some feat of arms that might compare with Agincourt.* Yet he was a brave and gallant soldier and had no equal in knightly prowess.

The news of this disaster reached Henry on leaving Beverley.† With the extraordinary composure which he seems to have always shown in adversity, he made no mention of the news to his companions till the following morning. Nor did he change, nor apparently hasten, the arrangements which had already been made for his early return to France. He kept an appointment to be present for the consecration of Richard Fleming at Lincoln, on 15th April, rejoined Catherine at York three days later, and then came quietly south to be present at the meeting of Parliament early in May.

The session was opened by Bishop Langley, the

* Hardyng, pp. 284, 285; *English Chronicle*, Cotton. MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 10; *Gesta*, p. 149; Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 301–304; Monstrelet, pp. 501, 502; Chastelain, i., 223–227; Du Fresne de Beaucourt, i., 220.

† Probably on 11th April, on which day he was at Howden, presumably on his way to Lincoln,—Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 304–307.



THOMAS, DUKE OF CLARENCE.

FROM HIS TOMB.

Chancellor, with a speech in which he compared Henry's modesty in success to that of the "valiant Emperor Julius Cæsar," and his patience in adversity to that of Job. The Commons took for their Speaker, Thomas Chaucer, the son of the poet. For the most part, the legislation of the session was not of an important character. The Treaty of Troyes was solemnly approved and ratified. An ordinance was made for the reformation of the gold currency, which would be recoined free of charge up to Christmas, but after that date only taken by weight.* Other matters of political interest were the settlement of the long-standing disputes with the Genoese, who now abandoned the French alliance; and the conclusion of a preliminary agreement for the return of King James to Scotland.

In spite of his political preoccupations Henry found time to attend a Chapter of the Benedictine monks that was being held at Westminster, and to give the weight of his authority in support of certain desirable reforms.† He was indeed never so busy that he could not devote to the affairs of the Church some portion of his wonderful mastery of detail. During the stress of his diplomacy, in 1416, he had set afoot a scheme for the establishment of two great religious foundations in the neighbourhood of London. The property held by Alien Priories in England, after long threatening, had at last been taken into the King's hands on the eve of the French war in 1414. The motive for confiscation

* *Rolls of Parliament*, iv., 129 *seq.*

† Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii., 537, 538.

was purely political, and there was no intention to divert the endowments of the Church to secular uses. Henry devoted a large portion of the funds thus placed at his disposal to new foundations, the one a house of the order of St. Bridget at Sion, near Brentford, the other a Charter-house at Sheen, on the opposite side of the Thames. In these two houses he was to be prayed for perpetually;

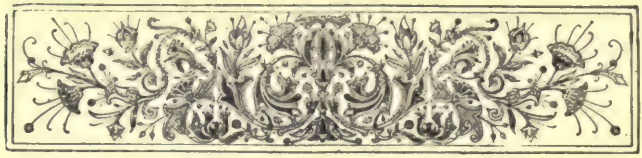
"when they of Sion rest, they of the Charter-house do their service, and in like-wise when they of the Charter-house rest the others go to, and by the ringing of the bells of either place each knoweth when they have ended their service." *

At Sion there was provision for the daily distribution of alms, and at the Charter-house a number of children were always to be kept at school. Though the charters of foundation were granted in 1416 and confirmed by Pope Martin in 1418, we may fairly conjecture that a portion of Henry's time during his last visit to England was occupied with the conclusion of so congenial an undertaking. Another of Henry's designs was the foundation of a great college at Oxford; though this last scheme never reached maturity it may have helped to suggest to Archbishop Chichele the endowment of his College of All Souls in memory of his royal master and those who fell at Agincourt. It was in part realised when Henry's son enriched his colleges at Eton and Cambridge out of the revenues of the suppressed Alien Priories.

* *English Chronicle*, Cotton MS., Claud., A. viii., f. 12. See the foundation Charters in Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vi., 31.

However, domestic affairs and schemes of philanthropy had alike to give way to the imperative demands of the French war. The brief session of Parliament was scarcely over when Henry left England for the last time. His personal influence had been of more avail in obtaining fresh troops than the loyal endeavours of his councillors. It was at the head of a substantial force of over a thousand men-at-arms and archers that the King set sail from Dover on 10th June, 1421. Queen Catherine was expecting her confinement and remained at home under the care of Bedford, now for the third time Regent of England.





# CHAPTER XXII

## THE LAST CAMPAIGN

### 1421–1422

AFTER the death of Clarence at Baugé, the English, under the skilful guidance of the Earl of Salisbury, fell back without further disaster to Normandy. In the face of adverse fortune Salisbury showed himself a true general. He gathered a fresh force from the English garrisons, and after a brief interval took the field once more. Meantime the enemy had advanced through Maine, and now lay before Alençon. Salisbury at his first attempt failed to raise the siege; but the French found themselves too weak to maintain their position, and in their turn retreated to Dreux. The English commander followed up his advantage with vigour, and harried Maine and Anjou with such success that his "runners ran before Angers," and brought home from their raid "the fairest and greatest prey of beasts that ever men saw." On Henry's arrival in Normandy Salisbury was able to report that "your liege people never dread less your enemy than they do at this day, and this part of



THE EARL OF SALISBURY AND JOHN LYDGATE.

FROM A CONTEMPORARY MINIATURE.

your land stood in good plight never so well as now."*

Though Salisbury had thus saved the situation on the Norman border, the moral effect of Baugé was in other quarters not inconsiderable. At Paris it required all Exeter's address to hold his own against the changeful moods of the commune. In Picardy, the Dauphin's supporters, under Jacques de Harcourt and the Gascon La Hire, began to make head against the Burgundians. The English position was therefore sufficiently critical when Henry landed in France for the last time at Calais, on the afternoon of the day that he sailed from Dover. A part of the English troops were sent forward in haste to Paris, but the King himself remained for a few days in Picardy in order to arrange a plan of campaign with the Duke of Burgundy. Philip joined Henry at Montreuil, and accompanied him as far as Abbeville, where the allies parted company; it was agreed that the Duke should return to direct operations against Jacques de Harcourt, whilst the English were to take the field against the Dauphin, who had lately won some places in the neighbourhood of Chartres. From Abbeville Henry marched by way of Beauvais and Gisors to Mantes, where he left his army under the command of Gloucester and made a hurried visit to Paris. In the capital he spent but four days, and having informed himself of the state of affairs both military and political, rejoined his army on 9th July and at once took the field.

The news of Henry's coming had acted like a

* *Fœdera*, x., 131, under date 21st June.

charm. The English recovered their ancient confidence, and the Dauphin retreated in haste beyond the Loire. Henry determined first to reduce Dreux, the garrison of which had long threatened the peace of Normandy.

The town of Dreux was strongly fortified, and its castle, perched on a rocky eminence, seemed to defy attack. The weak point was a walled vineyard on one side of the castle, on which the English concentrated their efforts. After a three weeks' siege the outer defences were carried, and on 8th August the garrison made an agreement of the usual kind to surrender if no rescue came within twelve days. The fall of Dreux was followed by the surrender of many minor fortresses between that town and Chartres. His communications with Normandy and Paris being thus secured, Henry resolved to carry his warfare boldly into the enemy's country.

Towards the end of August the English set out from Dreux, hoping to bring the Dauphin's forces to a decisive action. The French, however, fell back as Henry advanced, and allowed Beaugency on the Loire to be occupied without resistance. At Beaugency the King halted for a few days, whilst his light troops, under the Earl of Suffolk, raided the country beyond the river. But the French, who had learned prudence from experience, clung to their Fabian tactics, till dearth and sickness compelled the English to retire. From Beaugency Henry marched slowly up the right bank of the Loire. He captured the suburbs of Orleans by assault, but did not venture to attack the city itself.

On 18th September he reached Nemours, and four days later was at Villeneuve-le-Roi on the Yonne. The latter town, which was one of the Dauphin's recent acquisitions, was recovered after a brief siege. By the close of September, Henry was back in the neighbourhood of Paris, at Lagny-sur-Marne.

Since the French would not face him in the field, Henry had no alternative but to resume the piecemeal conquest of northern France, fortress by fortress. He determined to employ the winter months in the reduction of Meaux, which, since the fall of Melun, had been the chief Armagnac stronghold in the neighbourhood of Paris. The Duke of Exeter, in command of the English van, appeared before the town on 6th October. Henry himself remained till ten days later at Lagny, mustering his forces and preparing his train of siege artillery. On his arrival before Meaux, the King took up his quarters at the Abbey of St. Faro-les-Meaux to the north; Exeter had command on the west, the Earl of March on the east, and the Earl of Warwick on the south.

The city of Meaux had, in the hands of its Armagnac garrison, become a fortress of exceptional strength. The river Marne divided it into two parts, "the Town" on the north, and "the Market" on the south. The Town was well defended with walls and foss, but was not nearly so strong as the Market; for the latter was almost entirely surrounded by the broad and rapid Marne. The nominal captain of Meaux was Messire Louis Gast; but the real leader of the garrison was the Bastard of Vaurus, a Gascon soldier of fortune whose name,

even in that time of rapine and disorder, had become a byword for ferocious cruelty. Vaurus and his Armagnac mercenaries were the terror of Brie; for they plundered the country far and wide, held the inhabitants to ransom, and, if their hapless victims could not find the wherewithal to purchase their lives, hung them wantonly on a tree before the city. Meaux was indeed a nest of robbers, who gathered to themselves the scum of the soldiery of all nations, French, Scots, and English, desperate men who were certain to resist to the bitter end.

The siege of Meaux thus promised to be even worse than that of Melun. Henry commenced operations in his usual methodical and careful way: a bridge of boats was built across the Marne; the English lines were protected by entrenchments; and the artillery posted in well chosen positions. But fortune was from the first adverse. The Marne rose in flood and laid the whole country under water, so that the four divisions of the besieging host were completely isolated. Nearly all the available boats were in the hands of the garrison, whose flotillas harassed the English on every side. Communications were so difficult that Henry was compelled, for want of forage, to send all his horses away. Then the river fell as suddenly as it had risen, and the French cavalry wore out the English with perpetual alarms and excursions. Supplies could be obtained only by dint of constant fighting, whilst on the top of all other disasters sickness made its appearance in the camp. Still Henry pursued his purpose with dogged persistence; his artillery kept

up a merciless bombardment, mines were driven daily nearer to the walls, and under cover of the "sows" a constant endeavour was made to fill the foss. The garrison replied with equal vigour; their sorties were incessant, and whatever damage was done to walls or foss was made good before the besiegers could reap any advantage. Then, as though there were not troubles enough at Meaux, came news that the French had captured Avranches, and Henry had to drain his overtaxed host to send reinforcements to the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk on the Norman border. For the first time in the war the English began to lose heart, and some, on one pretext or another, made excuse to go home. Even the gallant Sir John Cornwall, stricken with sickness and by the loss of his only son, who was slain before his eyes, took a vow to fight no longer against Christians, and, abandoning the war, returned to England.

For five months the Town of Meaux held Henry at bay. In the spring of 1422 the garrison were looking hopefully to be relieved by Guy de Nesle, the Sire d'Offemont. On the 9th March Guy, with a chosen band, stole through the English lines by night. Most of his men had safely crossed the foss, and were already ascending the wall by the aid of those within when, as ill luck would have it, Guy slipped on a plank and fell into the foss. Those in front went back to help their captain; but the noise had alarmed the English guard, who, turning out in force, took Guy and his little company prisoners. The failure of this attempt at relief so

disheartened the garrison of Meaux that on the following morning they abandoned the Town and withdrew across the bridge to the Market.

Henry now occupied the Town and brought up his artillery to batter the bridge, which was still held by the enemy. To help in the assault, a great structure of wood was built and pushed forward through the streets on wheels until its forepart projected into the river and towered high above the bridge. Under cover of this novel fortress and by the aid of their artillery, the English, after much fighting, got the victory, and the greater part of the bridge was captured. Underneath the north wall of the Market by the river were a number of flour-mills, the successors of which still form a prominent feature in the modern town. After their victory on the bridge the English made the capture of these mills their chief concern. A portion of the artillery were lodged on a little island in mid-stream, and under cover of a heavy bombardment the mills were assaulted. Richard Beauchamp, the Earl of Worcester, who led the English attack, was killed by a cannon-ball; but his men captured the mills and so secured a position from which the walls of the Market might be approached without needless exposure.

Meanwhile, the siege was being pressed with equal vigour in other quarters. On the south side, where the Market was most open to attack, the Earl of Warwick's division, under cover of a "sow," succeeded in capturing an important outwork. On the west, the Marne and its branches had long pre-

vented the English from making any direct attack on the walls. But at last, after many sharp encounters, Sir Walter Hungerford's company got a footing on the far bank of the river, where, in the face of repeated sorties by the enemy, they constructed shelters for their artillery and set their miners to work. Though the walls were soon breached and crumbling, the garrison refused every summons to surrender, and with stubborn persistence again and again repelled the assaults of the English. On the eastern side, the Marne flowed with so wide and swift a stream as to make any attack seem hopeless. In that quarter little progress had been made when the Easter feast brought to both armies a brief respite. But at the end of the truce, which his respect for religion had dictated, Henry concentrated his efforts on this portion of the siege. Two large barges were lashed together, and on the platform thus obtained a huge tower was built, to match the height of the walls above the river. Henry's design was to float his monstrous structure down the stream and grapple it to the wall by a drawbridge provided in the upper story of the tower. Before, however, any trial could be made of this novel engine,* the remnant of the garrison at last sought for terms.

On 1st May an agreement was concluded, under which the Market of Meaux was to surrender absolutely if no rescue came within ten days. All

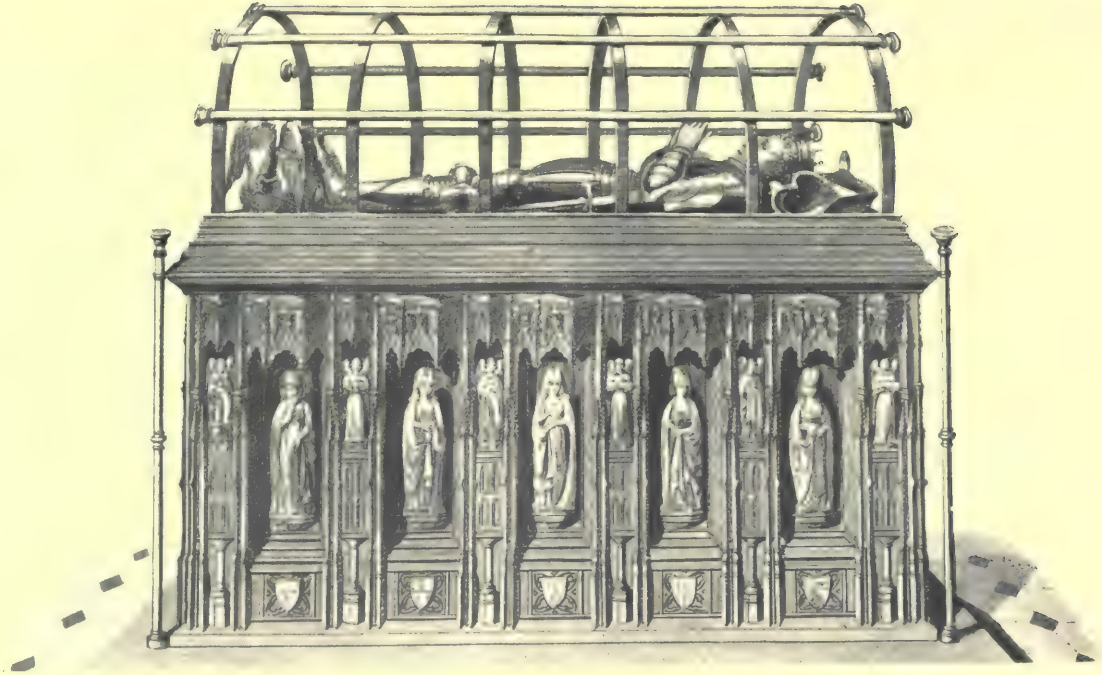
* Henry was so interested in his device that, after the surrender of the Market, an experiment was made which proved completely successful.

English, Irish, or Scots were to be at the King's mercy, as likewise were any who had shared in the murder of Montereau, or had at any time made oath of the final peace. A round dozen of the chief leaders were also excepted by name; of these four, namely Sir Louis Gast, the Bastard of Vaurus, Denis de Vaurus, and John Roumes, were to have doom and justice done and ministered to them; the others were to be kept prisoners until all towns and fortresses over which they had authority were yielded to the King. The Bastard of Vaurus and his kinsman were hanged on their tree at Meaux, a fate which they richly deserved. We may feel more pity for the gallant Louis Gast, for John Roumes, and an unlucky trumpeter, whose crime was that he had blown a horn during the siege; these three were sent to Paris and there executed.* Some other of the principal prisoners were long kept in captivity at Paris or in England. But the great majority were suffered to go free, though all the stores and treasure in Meaux became the booty of the conquerors.†

Meaux was but a second-rate town, and the importance of its capture depended rather on its strength and the audacity of its defenders. In itself

* *Fœdera*, x., 212–214. The horn-blower was perhaps one of those who insulted Henry by beating an ass till he brayed, when they shouted, "Ane rit," and asked the English if they heard their King calling for help (Fenin, p. 612).

† The chief authority for the siege of Meaux is Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 315–328; but see also Monstrelet, pp. 513, 516, 517, 520; *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 449–451; Fenin, pp. 612, 613; Des Ursins, pp. 562, 563; Chastelain, i., 283, 294–306.



THE MONUMENT OF THE EARL OF WARWICK.

it was not worth the price which its reduction cost; for the English had suffered terrible losses by sickness and the sword. Yet the fall of Meaux was of considerable moral effect, and marks a definite stage in the course of the English conquests. In accordance with the terms of surrender the French captains, who were taken prisoners, yielded possession of any neighbouring castles or fortresses over which they had authority. Other places of importance, like Compiègne, also abandoned the hope of further resistance. In the course of May and June nearly all the remaining Armagnac garrisons in Valois and the Beauvoisis surrendered to the Earl of Warwick, so that the position of the English and Burgundian forces to the north-east of Paris seemed now secure. In other quarters success had not been wanting. After a series of skirmishes, Philip of Burgundy and John of Luxembourg had brought Jacques de Harcourt to a decisive action at Mons-en-Vimeu on 30th August, 1421, and by their victory driven the Dauphin's supporters out of Picardy. On the Norman border Salisbury had recovered Avranches, whilst Suffolk had defeated Sire Oliver de Mauny, the sometime Captain of Falaise, who, though under an oath not to bear arms against the English, had stirred a formidable revolt in the Cotentin. Oliver de Mauny was taken prisoner and sent by Suffolk to Meaux. On his arrival Henry upbraided him for his conduct:

"You are," said the King, "an ancient knight, and ought to have observed your faith and honour, and by the law of arms deserve to die; but we give you your

life and will only send you into England, where you may learn the language and better maxims of Honour." *

The combined result of these successes had been to consolidate the English position. Henry was now master of all Normandy, Picardy, and the Isle of France, together with northern Champagne and a considerable part of Maine and the Orleannais.† In the two latter provinces many places were still held for the Dauphin; and even farther north his supporters maintained themselves with heroic persistence in a small territory round Boulogne and at Mont St. Michel. Charles had, however, no real authority north of the Loire, and with the approach of summer an early extension of the English conquests appeared to be imminent. But Henry's resources had been overstrained by the hardships of the long winter siege. His troops, worn out with fighting and sickness, needed rest before they could again take the field. The capture of Meaux was destined to be his last achievement.

* Hall, *Chronicle*, pp. 108, 109.

† At Henry's death the English conquests had nearly reached their limit. Afterwards the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk completed the reduction of Champagne and won some further territory in the west.



# CHAPTER XXIII

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

IN the midst of his busy warfare Henry had never lost sight of the necessities of the diplomatic situation. In his foreign policy he had kept steadily in view two chief objects: the first to isolate his French opponents; the second to secure armed assistance for himself. Though during the past year the English cause had made good progress, the prospect for the future was still fraught with dangers and difficulties. The Dauphin's party had been taught by adversity to husband and concentrate their strength, and were seeking fresh support from their allies in Spain and Scotland. On the other hand, the long siege before Meaux had shown how nearly the resources of England were exhausted. Henry had recognised from the first that he could not accomplish his purpose by war alone. But his diplomacy had not so far achieved the results which he hoped for. Unless he was to modify his plans he must procure from his own allies more direct assistance, and also deprive the Dauphin of the support which he received from friends abroad. To this task Henry devoted

himself with unabated resolution, in spite of the distractions of the siege of Meaux.

It was natural that Henry should have made an intimate alliance with Sigismund the first aim of his diplomacy. The prestige of the Imperial name and the real power of the German kingdom pointed alike in this direction. The weak point, as the result proved, was the personal character of the Emperor himself. Sigismund, in spite of his great ideals, lacked the stability of purpose that would have made him a trustworthy ally; he pursued his most important ends fitfully, and his attention was diverted easily to the passing interests of the moment. He was not wilfully disloyal to his English ally, whilst for the reform of the Church and for the Crusade he had a genuine enthusiasm. But when the crisis of Constance was past he was soon absorbed in the affairs of his German kingdom, of Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland. Sigismund's political aim in the Treaty of Canterbury was avowedly the recovery of the lands of the Empire. With that purpose he was to have joined Henry on the French frontier in the summer of 1417. In excuse for his failure, he had pleaded the delays of the Council, but was confident that he would keep his engagement in the following year. Even in April, 1418, he was much annoyed that Pope Martin should have overlooked his concern in the Anglo-French war.* When, however, Louis of Bavaria, who was the warmest advocate in Germany of the English alliance, quarrelled with some of the other princes,

* *Fœdera*, ix., 569.

Sigismund took part against him and alleged that this dispute had made the passage to France impossible. Louis complained bitterly to Henry of the Emperor's conduct; and in the end proved his own loyalty by coming to the help of the English at Melun.*

Sigismund himself, whilst still professing that he would fulfil his compact, declared that he must first settle the affairs of Germany, and suppress the Hussite movement in Bohemia. When this was done, he would collect an army and come to Henry's assistance.† As usual he talked of great schemes, but in action was shiftless and dilatory. He wasted all the autumn of 1418 in a vain endeavour to arrange terms with the Bohemians, and then found himself involved in a further quarrel with the Poles and Teutonic Knights. Henry, whilst recognising that "the matter touching the Feith against the Heretiks and Lollardes of Boeme" was God's cause, was anxious to see it set in such a way that the Emperor might be free to render the promised assistance.‡ With this intention, in May, 1419, he sent his confessor, Thomas Netter of Walden, on a mission to induce Wladislaw of Poland and Michael, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, to withdraw their support from the Bohemians.§ The choice of such an envoy perhaps indicates Henry's concern for a settlement that would be favourable to the Catholic Church. However, in spite of the King's

* *Fœdera* ix., 605–612. † *Id.*, ix., 604. ‡ *Id.*, x., 613.
§ *44th Report Deputy Keeper*, p. 611; cf. *Dict. National Biography*, xl., 232.

efforts, Sigismund's political and religious troubles continued, to the detriment of the Anglo-German alliance. On 28th April, 1420, Sir Hartank van Clux, who had remained as an English agent at the Imperial Court, wrote to his master from Schweidnitz:

"The Emperor said to me plainly, that I should not go from him unto time I should wit whether he might come to you this summer or not. And now I know well that he may not come, for this cause that many of the great lords of Bohemia have required him for to let them hold the same belief they be in. . . . Therefore the Emperor gathers all the power he may for to go into Bohemia upon them . . . and has charged me abide and see an end." *

This report must have made it clear to Henry that there was no hope of help from Sigismund. But the Treaty of Troyes was on the point of conclusion, and the King may have believed that after all he would finish the work, which he had so well begun, without foreign assistance. The Emperor, when informed of the Treaty, gave his assent to its terms, and certified anew his alliance with England; but his friendship did not go beyond a formal expression of satisfaction.† The disaster at Baugé and the pressure of the siege of Meaux compelled Henry to make a fresh attempt to obtain active assistance. In December, 1421, Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, and two colleagues, were commissioned to

* *Fœdera*, x., 208; *cf.* Lenz, p. 205, as to correct date.

† *Fœdera*, x., 14.

go on an embassy to Sigismund and the other princes of Germany. They were to represent how they had been sent by the King "for to have Succours of men, the which might never be more behoveful unto him, considered that he is now in the point and conclusion of his Labour, and through God's grace and help of his Allies and Friends shall soon have an end of his war." There were, however, certain persons, "as he that clepeth him Dauphin and his adherents," who still opposed the Treaty of Troyes; therefore Henry, "thinking that he had never more necessity," prayed his friends and allies to do him service at his wages such as he gave to his own subjects. Surely they would not fail him "no more than strangers men do to his adversary," whose wage to his mercenaries from Castile and Scotland was paid in money "so feeble that it passeth not a good English noble a month." The greatness of Henry's need is revealed in the urgency that was impressed on the ambassadors, and in the liberal terms which they were empowered to offer for five hundred lances to serve six months from the beginning of May. Fleming and his colleagues were to go first to the princes of the Rhine, and then to Sigismund himself, whom they were to pray to "come and do the King Succurse after his many Promises and often times writing." *

We do not know how this embassy fared in Germany. But though it did not produce any palpable

* *Fœdera*, x., 161–163. They did not leave England till February, 1422.

result, there is reason to believe that Henry still endeavoured through his agents to effect a reconciliation between Sigismund and his rebellious subjects, and thus achieve the purpose with which he had concluded the Treaty of Canterbury.*

In his anxiety to reap some practical advantage from the Anglo-German alliance Henry had not lost sight of the possibilities of success in other directions. After long negotiation a treaty had been concluded with Genoa on 29th May, 1421, under which the Italian Republic promised to render no further assistance to the Dauphin, Castile, or Scotland.† The definite withdrawal of the Genoese fleet from the French service seemed likely to be of real advantage; but again the actual results were disappointing, for before the end of the year the Republic succumbed to the power of Filippo Maria Visconti, the Duke of Milan. Ultimately, no doubt, Henry would have endeavoured to displace French influence in the Italian peninsula, and the abortive proposal for the adoption of John of Bedford by Joanna of Naples may have formed part of such a scheme.‡ For the time, however, his efforts were concentrated where they promised to be of more immediate advantage.

In beginning his warfare by the invasion and conquest of Normandy, Henry had shown that he recognised the importance to England of securing undisputed command of the narrow seas. But he was not blind to the use that might be made of the

* Lenz, pp. 213, 214. † *Fœdera*, x., 117–122. ‡ *Id.*, ix., 706.

English possessions in Aquitaine, and as time went on gave affairs in that region increasing attention. The territory which the English held in southern France had been much curtailed since the reign of Edward III., and was confined to a comparatively narrow district round Bordeaux and Bayonne. Commercial ties bound the people of these cities to England, and their loyalty was strengthened by hostility to their Spanish rivals in trade. But amongst the nobles of the country districts the long wars had fostered a spirit of independence, so that they rendered little obedience to either King. One of the chief Gascon lords at this time was John, Count of Foix, whose brother Gaston had taken Pontoise for King Henry and been made Count of Longueville, whilst a third brother, Archambault, Sire de Noailles, had died by the side of John of Burgundy.

After the Treaty of Troyes Henry sent Gaston to Aquitaine, with the manifest intention of winning over to the English side the Count of Foix, who in the previous January had accepted the governorship of Languedoc from the Dauphin. At the same time Sir John Tiptoft returned to his old post as Seneschal at Bordeaux. By their conciliatory policy, Tiptoft and Longueville succeeded in arranging terms with a number of the Gascon lords, and thus induced Charles d'Albret and the Count of Foix to tender their homage to Henry at Rouen in January, 1421. The Count sent a fresh embassy to Meaux in October, promising to rule Languedoc and Bigorre in Henry's name and to supply forces

for the war with the Dauphin. He was rewarded in March, 1422, by a formal commission as governor of Languedoc and Bigorre.* It was no doubt as a part of his scheme for extending English influence in southern France that Henry had, in July, 1421, directed John Stokes and Sir Walter de la Pole to treat with Sigismund for a grant of the Imperial rights in Dauphiné and Languedoc. † A more substantial advantage had been secured previously by the adhesion of the Duke of Savoy to the Anglo-Burgundian alliance in April, 1420.‡

In the North John of Brittany still pursued his temporising policy. After Baugé he went so far as to make a treaty of alliance with the Dauphin, but soon reverted to his old neutrality and renewed the truce with England.§ In this he was perhaps influenced by his brother Arthur de Richemont, who, during Henry's lifetime, observed faithfully the terms upon which he had received his release from captivity.

If Henry was anxious to obtain fresh allies, he desired not less to deprive his opponents of all foreign assistance. During the earlier stages of the war the French had been helped by the Castilian fleet; and in 1420 the Dauphin still hoped that his Spanish friends would make a diversion in his favour by attacking the English possessions in Aquitaine. But that same year the Infants of Aragon quarrelled

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* *Fœdera*, ix., 914, 915; x., 41, 45, 46, 129, 177–196.

† *Id.*, x., 143, 144. ‡ *Id.*, ix., 890.

§ *Id.*, x., 116, 152, 157; *cf.* Du Fresne de Beaucourt, *Charles VII.*, i., 223–225.

with their cousin, John of Castile, and stirred up a civil war which soon reduced both kingdoms to a state of hopeless anarchy. So, though Henry's diplomacy had failed to detach the Spaniards from their traditional alliance, the course of events relieved him of any fears from that quarter. Henry had, moreoever, a trusty ally in the King of Portugal, to whom Sir Thomas Carew was sent in January, 1422, with a confident appeal for further assistance.*

Perhaps the greatest service that the Spanish had rendered the Dauphin was to bring over the troops who came from Scotland in October, 1419. After the victory of Baugé, Pope Martin is said to have remarked: "Truly the Scots are an antidote for the English"; and Henry himself must have felt more than ever the importance of placing his relations with the northern kingdom on a better basis. The state of affairs in Scotland was somewhat peculiar. The young King James had been taken prisoner by the English in 1406, when only eleven years old. Since his own accession to the throne, Henry V. had treated James with special kindness, hoping through his influence to win over the Scots to the side of England. But Robert, Duke of Albany, who ruled in Scotland, was on the whole hostile to the English; and it may be that, as some have suggested, he had no wish to see his nephew return home, and so put an end to his own regency. At all events, during Robert's lifetime Henry's repeated endeavours to arrange terms for the

* *Fœdera*, x., 167.

restoration of the young King met with no success. However, in the autumn of 1420, Robert of Albany died and was succeeded as Regent by his son Murdach, who proved an unpopular and incompetent ruler. Thus, in spite of their success in France, the Scots began to favour an agreement with England; and in the following summer negotiations were reopened with better prospects. Still it was not till nearly two years after the death of Henry V. that James returned to his native land, taking with him as his Queen, Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset and cousin of the English King. The Scottish affair is the one point on which Henry's successors were able to carry out his policy. The practical advantage was, however, slight; for, as King of Scotland, James showed little inclination to favour the interests of England.

The record of Henry's diplomacy is disappointing. The threads were broken abruptly by his death, and no one apparently had the knowledge or authority to pick them up. What he might have accomplished had he lived it is impossible to conjecture. But this much seems certain, that Henry's success in treaty-making, as in his warfare and civil government, depended chiefly on his own personality. He attracted friendship and inspired confidence. Sigismund in England was a different man to the shiftless politician from whom in later years the English agents could extract nothing but vain promises. Young princes, like Philip of Burgundy, James of Scotland, and Arthur de Richemont, looked up to Henry with something both of awe

and affection. Him perhaps they would have been content to follow as a leader under whom all might serve with honour.

Did Henry himself anticipate the entire success of his diplomacy? Or was he prepared for an eventual compromise, that would be "a moderyng of his hole title to the crown of France," whilst securing him the practical supremacy in Christendom? As a statesman Henry was compelled to adapt his avowed intentions to the circumstances of the moment; the "Heir of France" could not publicly admit any flaw in his pretensions. But we know that he had never overrated the value of a merely nominal dignity, nor underestimated the risk of driving his opponents to an extremity. Before the campaign of Agincourt he would have accepted the Treaty of Bretigny as the basis for a permanent peace. Three years later he viewed with alarm the prospect of a prolonged war, and was anxious for terms that would secure him in the possession of Normandy. At Meulan his demands had increased, but he would still have exchanged his claims to the French Crown for more substantial advantages. Even in March, 1422, it is said that he suggested to Philip of Burgundy the wisdom of finding some means to treat with his adversary for a conclusion of the war.* It is admissible to conjecture that Henry would have agreed to an arrangement by which he retained his northern conquests and his ancient territory in Aquitaine. Such a compromise is indicated in his dying advice, that the English

* Du Fresne de Beaucourt, *Hist. Charles VII.*, i., 339.

should make no peace which did not secure them the full sovereignty of Normandy. To conquer all France by force of arms would, as Henry realised, be perilous and tedious. But in a country where the sentiment of national unity was still so weak, and the tradition of provincial independence still so strong, a different policy may not have appeared hopeless. Henry had already accomplished more by playing off the French princes and nobles one against another, than by dint of battle. A further development on the same lines might have brought him all that he desired as the acknowledged overlord of France.

The princes of France and the West were not, however, likely to sink their differences and abandon their personal ambitions except on behalf of some common cause that appealed to the imagination and interests of all alike. The tradition of such a cause still survived, and probably none would have denied the duty of the Crusade as the supreme ideal for Christian men. It was the glory of the Crusades that they had brought together people of all degrees and divers lands in the pursuit of a single end. If the practical result had been too often a renewed outburst of discord and jealousy the inspiration of a noble ideal was not wasted. Thus had the unity of Christendom been made manifest; and if the restoration of that unity was to be more than a vain pretence, Christian princes must once more prove themselves capable of common action.

To Henry the Crusade was a real thing; it was at once an end and a means to an end. The stories of

his father's pilgrimage to Jerusalem and warfare for the Cross in Lithuania were amongst the earliest memories of his boyhood. As a youth his imagination had been fired by the adventures of Godfrey de Bouillon and the early Crusaders. As a King and practical statesman he had laboured to restore the shattered unity of Christendom. Through his friendship with Sigismund, to whom as King of Hungary the Turks were an ever-present danger, he must have gained a fuller insight into the political aspect of the Eastern Question. In a new Crusade, to recover Jerusalem from the Infidels and to drive back the Turks from Constantinople, there presented itself to him an enterprise which should afford both a motive and an object for the re-union of Christendom. Henry showed his grasp of both sides of the question when he appealed to the princes of Germany for their support in his French war on account of "the good and profit that might arise if there were Peace and Rest amongst Christian princes, for then might they together intend against Miscreants, in increase and augmentation of the Christian Faith, as well as to the good of the Church." *

That Henry V. had long contemplated the possibility of a new Crusade is a fair conclusion from the facts of his own and his father's life. But the idea seems first to have taken a definite shape during the siege of Melun, when Henry and Philip of Bur-

* *Fœdera*, x., 162. The policy described above is almost identical with that commended to Henry by Hoccleve in 1412. France and England, says Hoccleve, ought to be one in heart ; he was "stuffed

gundy are said to have pledged one another to undertake the recovery of Jerusalem as soon as affairs in France were settled. In the following year Sir Gilbert de Lannoi, a Burgundian knight, and the Duke's chamberlain, was sent by Henry on a mission to the East to collect information on the state of the Mohammedan power and the best course by which a Christian armament might advance. Gilbert went first to Alexandria, and thence travelled through Syria and the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean to Constantinople. He did not return home till after Henry's death, when the progress of events had made his errand fruitless. The record of his journey has, however, been preserved to prove the sincerity of his master's intentions.*

The dim outline in which we can trace Henry's plans for the future is not wanting in pathetic interest. In the hour of death it was still the passion of his life to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. But the fulness of his conception and the power of execution alike went with him to the grave.

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with woe" to see the mischief caused by foreign war and civil discord. Purchase peace by way of marriage; and let him, that right heir is, cease all strife. Then might the two realms make war upon the miscreants, and bring them into the faith of Christ; which is the way to conquer Heaven's bliss. (*Regiment of Princes* stanzas 756-777).

*Sir Gilbert de Lannoi's Report was printed in *Archæologia*, xxi., 281, from the manuscript at Lille. In the *English Chronicle* (Cotton. MS., Claudius, A. viii., f. 12) the mission is ascribed to Sir Hugh de Lannoi. Gilbert and Hugh were brothers and for many years held high places in the service of the Dukes of Burgundy.



# CHAPTER XXIV

## BOIS DE VINCENNES

### 1422

AFTER the surrender of Meaux Henry went to join his Queen at Paris. In the darkest days of the long winter siege the news that Catherine had been safely delivered of a son (6th December, 1421) came to the English camp as a ray of gladness. Later tradition, prophetic after the event, represents the King as foreboding the child's unhappy destiny: "I, Henry, born at Monmouth, shall small time reign and get much; and Henry, born at Windsor, shall long reign and lose all; but God's will be done." *

As soon as Catherine was recovered sufficiently from her confinement she had made her preparations to rejoin her husband in France. But from one cause or another her departure was delayed till 12th May, 1422 when she crossed over under the charge of Bedford, whose place in England was taken by his brother Humphrey.

Henry and Catherine met at Bois de Vincennes

* Hall, p. 108.

on 25th May, and four days later entered Paris. The English King and his Queen lodged at the Louvre, where on Whit-Sunday they kept open feast, sitting at table in public, and wearing their crowns with royal pomp. The unhappy Charles of France was, as before, almost forgotten; though some mourned in secret for his low estate, none dared murmur openly, since the fear of King Henry lay upon them all.

In Paris Henry remained for over a fortnight, busy with affairs of state. But the long anxiety and hardships of the previous winter had broken his health and impaired his ancient energy. The hand of death was indeed upon him; though Henry, thinking that the early summer heat had made the capital unwholesome, hoped to recover himself by rest in the better air of the country.* So on 11th June, accompanied by Catherine and the French Court, he removed to Senlis. There for a time his health seemed to mend, and at Midsummer he was well enough to pay a brief visit of inspection to Compiègne, which had just surrendered. A rumoured plot to betray Paris to the Dauphin next recalled him for a little to the capital, but finding no serious cause for alarm he returned again to Senlis.

Though Henry's untiring zeal would not let him rest undisturbed, he had so far been content to leave the direction of the war to John of Bedford and the Earl of Warwick. But in the latter part of July there came an urgent appeal from Philip of Burgundy. The Dauphin's advisers, thinking that

* *English Chronicle*, Harley MS., 2256, f. 197 v°

the King of England was far away, had plucked up courage to take the offensive, and besieged the town of Cosne-sur-Loire. The Burgundian garrison, being hopelessly overmatched, soon agreed to surrender unless rescued within six weeks. All help must come from a distance, and since the appointed interval would expire on 16th August, if the town was to be saved there was no time to be lost. When the news reached Senlis, Henry at once declared that he would go in person to the help of his ally at the head of his whole army.

Though in spirit courageous as ever, Henry was too weak to ride, and had to travel in a litter. Still his sickness increased daily, and the fatigue of the journey exhausted his scanty store of strength. At Corbeil he was compelled to abandon his enterprise and resign the command of the English forces to his brother John. After a few days' rest the King's health was so much better that he started to go by water down the Seine to Paris.* His unconquerable will prompted him to encourage his friends by a show of energy. On reaching Charenton he made a brave endeavour to take his proper place at the head of his men. For the last time he mounted his horse, and though in great pain managed to ride a little distance. But the motion proved too much for his weakened frame. Sadly he suffered his servants to place him once more in his litter and carry him through the park to

* Henry was at Corbeil on 25th July and 6th August. Cf. *42nd Report of Deputy Keeper*, pp. 445, 452. He reached Bois de Vincennes about 15th August.

the royal castle of Bois de Vincennes, outside the walls of Paris. There, as the days wore away without any sign of improvement, it became manifest that the end was approaching. Bedford, who had successfully accomplished his mission for the relief of Cosne, returned in haste to receive his brother's last commands. Not even the nearness of death could disturb the composure and soundness of Henry's judgment. With prudent forethought the dying King made the best provision possible for the welfare of his infant son, and the governance of his double realm.

The last few days of his life were spent by Henry in constant converse with his brother Bedford, his uncle the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of Warwick, and others of his most trusted councillors. He charged them solemnly to pursue to a successful end the great war which he had undertaken, not, as he declared before God, through any lust for earthly dominion, but from a firm belief in his own just title, and in the earnest desire to establish lasting peace. John of Bedford was to have as a special trust the care of his infant son, and was to be regent of France and governor of Normandy. Humphrey of Gloucester was to retain the regency of England, but was to act as his brother's subordinate. The Duke of Exeter, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Earl of Warwick were to be governors and tutors of the little King. If we may believe the Burgundian chroniclers, Henry foresaw with the prophetic instinct of a dying man the dangers that chiefly threatened his great design. He warned his councillors to be careful, so far as in them lay, to avoid

all cause of quarrel with Philip of Burgundy. To his brother Humphrey, whose weak ambition he understood, he sent a last message, entreating him not to prefer his private interest to the public weal. He reminded them all, that if there should arise any misunderstanding between the English and their allies, "then would the needs of this realm where our business is now so well advanced, be brought utterly to ruin." Whatever happened, they were never to make terms of peace which did not secure to England the full sovereignty of Normandy; and under no circumstances were they to release the Duke of Orleans from his captivity.*

If Henry was confident to the last in the justice of the broad principles which had inspired his policy, he recognised with the humility of true greatness that he might have erred in details. He prayed that he might be forgiven for whatever wrong he had done unwittingly to any man; and directed that restitution should be made to those who, like Queen Joanna and the heirs of Scrope, had suffered harsh treatment. His own and his father's debts were to be paid in full, and the services of his friends were rewarded by fitting legacies.

* There is some disagreement as to the exact character of Henry's political dispositions. The Burgundian writers allege that Philip was to have the refusal of the regency of France. It seems clear, however, that Bedford was to have all the real authority, and was to rely upon the support of the Beauforts and the Earl of Warwick. Humphrey of Gloucester was not trusted further than could be helped. *Cf.* Monstrelet, p. 530; Elmham, *Vita*, pp. 332, 333; *Gesta*, p. 159; Hardyng, p. 387. See also Stubbs, *Const. Hist.*, iii., 95, 98, and Ramsay, i., 303.

When he had thus put his worldly affairs in order, Henry turned his thoughts to other things, and made his preparation for death with the same sincere devotion and calm self-confidence that had never failed him in life. On the evening of the last day of August, feeling that his end was near, he bade the physicians tell him how long he had yet to live. After a vain attempt at evasion they answered: "Sire, think on your soul! For saving the mercy of God we judge not that you can survive two hours." Then Henry made his confession, and, after he had received the last Sacraments of the Church, asked the priests who stood about him to recite the Seven Penitential Psalms. Now that the hot August day was done, and it was near midnight the King, worn out and weary, lay propped up in the arms of his confessor, Thomas Netter of Walden. Through the long night-watch the chaplains chanted psalm by psalm, whilst their master made no sign save for the silent movement of his lips, which showed how his thoughts still followed them. When, however, the priests came to the words: "*Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion, ut ædificentur muri Jerusalem,*"* Henry stopped them, saying: "Good Lord! Thou knowest that mine intent hath been, and yet is, if I might live, to re-edify the walls of Jerusalem." For a little longer the dying King lay unconscious in the arms of his faithful confessor, whilst the other priests renewed their prayers and psalms.

* Psalm li., 18: "O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem."

Once again, at the very moment of death, he spoke, when, as though in strife with some ghostly antagonist, there came the low muttered words: "Thou liest! Thou liest! My portion is with the Lord Jesus." Thus, unconquered to the end, did the Christian soldier pass from his earthly warfare through the portals of that heavenly Jerusalem on which his hopes were ever set.

It was about two o'clock on the morning of 1st September * that Henry breathed his last. He had but just completed his thirty-fifth year, and his untimely end was deeply mourned as well in France as in England. The people of Paris would have been glad to claim him for their own, but Henry's English subjects felt rightly that there was only one place in which the remains of their hero could be laid to rest. The body was therefore embalmed, and preparations were made for its removal to England. The funeral car was of great magnificence; above the silk-covered coffin there rested on a scarlet cushion a life-sized effigy of the dead King, clad in the royal robes, with the crown upon its head and the sceptre in its hand. The four horses which drew the car were splendidly caparisoned; the first with the ancient arms of England; the second with the arms of France and England, quarterly, as Henry bore them in his lifetime; the third with the arms of France; and the fourth with the arms of

* The official date was considered to be 31st August; the reign of Henry VI. dated from 1st September.—*Fœdera*, x., 253. The cause of death was probably dysentery, aggravated by the hardships of war. The room where he died is still shown; it is now used as an armoury.

the noble King Arthur,* who, like Henry, had never been conquered. Upon either side of the car there went a great company of torch-bearers dressed in white. The escort was formed by five hundred men-at-arms, all in black armour, riding on black barbed horses, and bearing their lances point downward. Behind came the mourners, King James of Scotland and the Duke of Bedford at their head, and a long train of English knights and nobles following in the rear.

The funeral procession started from Bois de Vincennes on 14th September, and without entering Paris, came to the Abbey of St. Denis, the ancient burial-place of the French Kings. There a solemn service was held in the evening and a requiem sung on the morrow. From St. Denis the journey was continued by way of Pontoise to Rouen, which latter city was reached on 19th September. At Rouen the coffin was to rest for some days in state, whilst the final preparations for the passage home were completed. Before all was ready, the news that King Charles lay dying recalled Bedford to Paris and compelled him to leave to others the duty of escorting his brother's remains to England. It was late in October when the procession resumed its route, and passing by way of Abbeville, Hesdin, and Boulogne, came to Calais. Queen Catherine had preceded her husband's remains to Rouen, and, accompanying the procession from that city, crossed over to England, probably on the last day of October.

* Azure, three crowns or.



CHANTRY OF HENRY V. IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

So they brought the body of their dead King to Dover, not quite seven years after the triumphal return from Agincourt. By the old familiar route the sad procession wound its way through Kent. At each halting place, at Canterbury before the shrine of St. Thomas in the Cathedral, at Ospringe, at Rochester, and at Dartford, there was a solemn service in the evening, and a requiem mass at morn before the journey was resumed. For the last time the Mayor and citizens of London assembled on Blackheath to do honour to their beloved prince. At London Bridge a goodly band of Bishops, priests, and monks were waiting to receive the dead with solemn chant and psalm. Across the Bridge, through Lombard Street, and up Cheapside the long procession moved till it reached the great Gothic Cathedral, where Henry in his life had come so often with prayer and thanksgiving. At St. Paul's, where a solemn dirige was sung, the body rested all night before the high altar. Next morning after mass came lords and knights and all the commons of the city, and escorted the funeral car from St. Paul's by the Strand to Westminster. On the following day, 7th November, the victor of Agincourt was carried to his last resting-place near the shrine of St. Edward, with such mingled mourning and splendour as had never been witnessed at the funeral of any of his predecessors.

Henry the Fifth's Chantry stands in the midst of the tombs of the Plantagenet Kings, rising above them all and holding, as was fit, the foremost place in the Abbey, which owed its practical completion

to his munificence.* No expense was spared that might do honour to a prince whom the succeeding generation reverenced not less as saint than as hero. The Confessor's Chapel was curtailed to make room for the new shrine, and even the tombs of former kings did not escape injury. The Chantry itself, built in the shape of the letter H, and adorned with splendid sculpture, was on such a scale as to make it one of the most conspicuous objects in the Abbey. Above it still hang the helmet, saddle, and shield, that formed part of the original funeral equipment.† Upon the tomb was placed a recumbent effigy of the King; the head was of solid silver, and the body of oak covered with plates of silver-gilt.‡ Such a wealth of precious metal excited the cupidity of an irreverent age. During the troubles of the Reformation, thieves broke into the Abbey and stripped the figure of its too splendid ornament.§

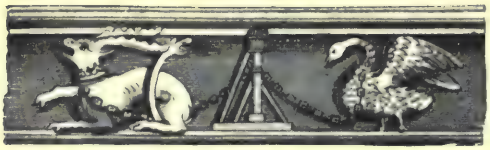
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* Six bays of the nave were built at Henry's expense under the superintendence of Whittington.—*Fœdera*, ix., 78. A thousand marks a year were devoted to this purpose.

† Not "the bruised helmet" of Agincourt. Cf. *Fœdera*, x., 257.

‡ An example of similar work still exists in the monument of William de Valence in the adjoining Chapel of St. Edmund; but in this case the material is copper chased with gold and enamelled.

§ *Acts of the Privy Council*, New Series, i., 328. 30 January, 1546, Inquisition ordered "after suche persons as of late had broken in the nyght season into the Churche of Westminstre and robbed away the ymage of King Henry of Monmouthe, being all of sylver plates." Some damage had been done previously in the reign of Edward IV., when two teeth were knocked out and stolen. Addison (*Spectator*, 329) makes comment on the ruined monument: "Some Whig, I 'll warrant you" (says Sir Roger); "you ought to lock up your Kings better; they will carry off the body too if you do not take care."







BADGES, SHIELD, HELMET, AND SADDLE OF HENRY V.

Since that date, the bare and headless effigy has borne pathetic witness to the transitory glory of Henry's achievements. The original inscription, "*Gallorum mastrix jacet hic Henricus in urna. Anno MCCCCXXII. Domat omnia virtus,*" has also vanished. But Henry's best epitaph was written in the Acts of his son's Council:*

"Departed this life the Most Christian champion of the Church, the beam of prudence and the example of righteousness, the invincible King, the flower and glory

* Nicolas, *Proc. Privy Council*, iii. 3. Accounts for the expenses of Henry's funeral and tomb, amounting to £1052. 15*s.* 7*d.*, are given in the *Fœdera*, x., 256, 257. The iron work was made by Roger Johnson of London, (*id.*, x., 490). The cost of the effigy was defrayed by Queen Catherine. Poor Catherine herself was unhappy both in life and in death. She was a beautiful woman, but weak and insignificant in character. Some time after her first husband's death she contracted a clandestine marriage with Owen Tudor, a Welsh squire in her household, by whom she had three sons, Edmund (father, by Margaret Beaufort, of Henry VII.), Jasper, Duke of Bedford, and Owen, a monk at Westminster. She died in 1437 and was buried in the Lady Chapel at Westminster. Her tomb was removed by her grandson, when he built the new Chapel which bears his name. The Queen s body, loosely wrapped in lead, lay for nearly three centuries by her husband's grave in a rough wooden chest. Pepys, describing how he visited the Abbey, on the 23rd February, 1668–69, says: "I took them to Westminster Abbey, and there did show them all the tombs very finely . . . and here did we see by particular favour the body of Queen Katherine of Valois; and I had the upper part of her body in my hands and I did kiss her mouth, reflecting upon it that I did kiss a Queen, and that this was my birthday, thirty-six years old that I did first kiss a Queen" (*Diary*, viii., 236, ed. Wheatley). In 1778, the Queen's remains were removed from public gaze to the Percy vaults, and at last, in 1878, by the care of Dean Stanley, received a fitting tomb in the chantry of her royal husband (*Archæologia*, xlvi., 281–293).

of all knighthood, Henry the Fifth since the Conquest, King of England, Heir and Regent of the realm of France, and Lord of Ireland, at the Castle of Bois de Vincennes near Paris on the last day of August in the year of Our Lord one thousand four hundred and twenty-two, and of his reign the tenth."





# CHAPTER XXV

## CONCLUSION

FOR two centuries Henry remained the peculiar darling of the English people. Not even the naval glories of the Elizabethan age could dim the memory of his martial renown. With the playgoers and the playwrights of the time of Shakespeare, the "Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth" were a favourite theme, and the national sentiment was well reflected in Drayton's ballad:

> "O when shall English men
> With such acts fill a pen,
> Or England breed again
> Such a King Harry."

Yet a century afterwards, when "Arms and Battles and Victories and Glory were become familiar and an every-day entertainment," the courtly historiographer could find no nearer parallel for the victor of Blenheim and Ramillies than the conqueror of Agincourt.* Now, almost in our own time, the charge at Balaclava has added fresh lustre to St. Crispin's Day, and year by year the anniversary of

* Rymer, Preface to *Fœdera*, vol. ix.

the modern battle recalls to memory the hero of the ancient victory.

To his contemporaries Henry was the flower of Christian chivalry, the most virtuous of all princes of his time.* He stands in history as the true type of the mediæval hero-king: stately in bearing and prudent in speech, valiant in arms and provident in counsel, a lover of religion and a great justicer.† No ruler had ever a higher conception of his rights or was more stern in their enforcement. His strong sense of personal dignity and of the importance of his kingly office made him seem proud and formal on ceremonial occasions. By his subjects, his councillors and captains, and even his kinsfolk he was held in such fear and reverence that none dared transgress his orders. Disobedience and every form of disloyalty he punished with merciless severity.‡

Henry must have been as terrible in his wrath as was his great ancestor, the first Edward. But underneath his stern demeanour there lay a gentle consideration for others to which Edward was a stranger. In his ordinary relations he showed himself courteous and affable to all men.§ He was not vindictive and bore no malice; an offence forgiven was forgotten. Those who served him faithfully had never reason to complain that their services went unrewarded. In spite of his strict discipline he was careful for his soldiers, and asked of them nothing which he would not do himself; he shared all their hardships and encouraged them by the example of

* *Gregory's Chronicle*, p. 148.
† *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 480.
‡ *Id., ib.*; Monstrelet, p. 532.
§ *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 380.

his conspicuous valour. Harsh in his treatment of those who resisted him, he was yet merciful to defenceless opponents, and tender to women and men of religion. To Henry it was a sufficient recommendation to be weak and poor; "let right and equity be done, and in especial see that the poorer party suffer no wrong" is the King's endorsement on a petition, and is a fair example of how Henry answered the complaints of his humblest subjects.* Scrupulous himself of the rights of others, he hated oppression and extortion.†

"He was a prince of a high understanding and of a great will to keep justice. Wherefore the poor folk loved him above all others. For he was prone and careful to preserve the lesser folk, and to protect them from the violence and wrong that most of the nobles had done to them. . . . Now, King Henry, when at Paris, wrested from the citizens their love and obedience, for he had justice strictly observed and duly rendered by all." ‡

No conqueror ever received greater homage than this from the conquered.

In his personal conduct Henry was chaste and temperate, so austere in his self-restraint as to be

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* See for this and other instances, *Gesta*, Preface, p. xxiv.

† "Et tout premier il estoit prince de justice tant envers soy même, par exemple, comme envers autruy par equité droituriere: ne supportoit personne par faveur ni forfais ne laissoit impunis par affinité de sang."—Chastelain, i., 334.

‡ Pierre Fenin, p. 615; *cf.* also *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 160–162, 480 (two different writers).

almost ascetic. Drunkenness and duelling he detested,* and the use of oaths or strong language was as abhorrent to him as to his son. No harlots were permitted in his camp, as was the French custom, and all wantonness was sternly repressed. In religion he was profoundly orthodox, not only as regarded outward observances, but with a simple piety that entered into every action of his daily life. His earnestness of purpose, and the firmness of his convictions inspired him with a resolution that never wavered. Neither reverses nor success disturbed his marvellous composure of soul. If any mishap befell his arms he would bid his friends remember that the issues of war were changeful: "Would you have Fortune smile on you, meet her with a firm and high countenance!" His decisions were quickly formed and once made seldom altered. Though he could on occasion speak forcibly and to the point, he was not a man of many words, and would seldom say more than: "It is impossible," or "It shall be done." When, however, he had thus spoken he felt as firmly pledged as though he had called Christ and all the saints to witness.†

Some have accused Henry of cruelty, both as a religious persecutor at home and as a conqueror in France. So far as regards the charge of religious persecution, we need not question that the opinions of

* *Versus Rythmici*, p. 115; Hardyng, p. 383.

† See, generally, *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 380, and Chastellain, i., 334. There is a pithy humour about many of Henry's recorded sayings; see pages 140, 254, 309, 310. Once he answered some complainants grimly: "War without fire is like sausages without mustard—worth nothing" (Des Ursins, p. 561).

Badby and Oldcastle were to Henry horrible. That heresy might be punished justly with death was a theory which he accepted in common with other orthodox princes of his time. That he had any desire to adopt extreme measures, where they might consistently be avoided, we have no reason to believe. As Prince he had, for whatever reason, opposed the harsh policy favoured by Archbishop Arundel. As King, he inspired the more moderate course which Chichele pursued with better success. Those Lollards who were executed during Henry's reign suffered rather for their alleged political offences than for their religious opinions.*

Henry's treatment both of the Lollards and of those who too stubbornly resisted him in arms was founded upon a firm belief in his own rights and in the justice of his cause. His success in war he attributed not to any merit of his own, but to the favour of Heaven. After Agincourt he told his prisoners: It was no wonder he had the victory over them, though he claimed no glory for himself. That was the work of God, who was wroth for their sins; it was great wonder that worse had not befallen them, since there was no ill-deed of which they had not been guilty.† To such a temperament tolerance of opponents, whether in thought or in action, was an impossibility. In Henry's eyes, to be just

* The most notable exception is John Claydon, executed in August, 1415, during the King's absence. William Taylor, who was burnt at Smithfield early in the next reign (1st March, 1423), had previously recanted and been pardoned under Henry V., but relapsed.

† Des Ursins, p. 520; *Chron. St. Denys*, v. 581; St. Remy, i., 261.

with sternness was a King's first duty. His execution of prisoners was based always on some real or supposed transgression; whether a breach of the laws of war, as in the case of Alain Blanchard; monstrous crimes, as in that of Vaurus; or the technical rebellion of those taken in arms against their lawful sovereign. Of vindictive or wanton bloodshed there is no trace in Henry's treatment either of domestic or foreign enemies. It is a French writer who describes how the English soldiers told the people of Harfleur: "Fear not that we shall do you any harm! We shall not behave towards you as did your countrymen towards the people of Soissons, for we are good Christians."* His own contemporaries admired the strictness of Henry's justice and the firmness of his discipline. The general, who punished so sternly unlicensed plundering and violence, was not likely himself to go beyond what he believed to be lawful.

It was owing to his confidence in himself and his mission that Henry was able to perform what he did. No prince, wrote one who had good opportunity to judge, was better endowed with the qualities needful for a successful conqueror.† All men and all things yielded to the charm of his personality or to the strength of his will. Nothing seemed too great for him to attempt; nothing did he think

* Des Ursins, p. 509. Soissons was captured by the Armagnacs in 1414; the citizens were treated with outrageous violence, and many of the garrison—which included some English archers—executed in cold blood.—Monstrelet, p. 337.

† *Chron. St. Denys*, vi., 480.

too trivial for his notice.* Vast schemes of policy and the minor details of administration alike bore witness to his vigorous direction. As a general he laid his plans with care and forethought, and executed them with patient strategy or prudent daring, as the occasion required. But his share in the war did not begin or end thus. His great expeditions were prepared and organised under his personal supervision. When in the field, he busied himself with the daily routine of military discipline, and impressed his contemporaries not less by the good government of his host than by the splendour of his achievements. So also in his diplomacy and his domestic policy Henry's influence extended to every detail. Public documents, from the instructions to his envoys at the Papal and Imperial Courts to the endorsement on the petition of a poor woman, were, when the occasion required, written by the King in his own hand. Even amid the stress of war he could find leisure to redress the private grievances of his English subjects. Did the progress of his campaign permit him to visit Rouen, the task of reorganising the conquered provinces proceeded with double vigour. It seemed as though Henry could turn without an effort from the greatest affairs of state to the simplest matters of routine and prove himself equally at home in them both.

The successful conduct of a great war, the combinations of European diplomacy, the broad

* "Toutes ses affaires il manoit lui-même, toutes les conduisoit, et dressoit, toutes les pesoit et abalançoit au doigt premier que emprendre."—Chastelain, i., 334.

principles of domestic policy, the complications of ecclesiastical reform might each have furnished a sufficient field for an ambitious ruler. Henry grasped them all and bound them all together as parts of one great design. Under his influence war and diplomacy went hand in hand, and there was no division of interest between Church and State. It was the strength of his position at home that made his French conquests possible. It was as the victor of Agincourt that he became the arbiter of European politics, and in effect dictated his terms to the Council of Constance. His war and his alliances, the restoration of peace to England and of unity to the Church were all dependent one on another. They all led up to that splendid dream of a greater unity, when Christendom should be at peace with itself, and when at last through a new Crusade the ideal which had inspired the noblest spirits of the Middle Ages should find its practical realisation.

How far Henry could have accomplished his great designs, had his life been spared, is a question upon which it is perhaps vain to speculate. But his success was due so much to his own personality that we cannot draw any certain conclusion from the failure of those who came after him. John of Bedford, with many fine qualities, had neither Henry's genius nor advantages: his own authority in English affairs was uncertain, and he lacked the prestige and the position which had made Henry's voice of such weight in the councils of Europe. The force of circumstances compelled John to concentrate his




JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD.

FROM A CONTEMPORARY MINIATURE.

efforts in France, and to abandon those wider schemes through which Henry had planned to complete the success of his first undertakings. He was well served by his lieutenants in the war, and especially by Salisbury, whose death before Orleans, in 1428, was a great disaster to his country. But at home he had no trusty representative to render him such loyal assistance as he himself had given to Henry. Humphrey of Gloucester was clever and ambitious, but self-seeking; he showed much concern for his personal advantage, and little understanding of the interests of his family and England. It was in vain that Bedford laboured constantly to promote the English cause in France; his attention was distracted again and again by the necessity of settling disputes at home; his exertions to preserve the friendship of Burgundy were frustrated by the selfishness of Humphrey, who had married Jacqueline of Hainault and sought to secure her inheritance, to which Duke Philip had real or fancied claims.* The policy to which Bedford gave his life was not of his own creation; but no man could have assumed an inherited task with more loyal or entire devotion. In John of Bedford were centred all the hopes of success for Lancaster and England. How much depended on his personal direction was made manifest in the rapid disasters that followed on his death. It is not unfair to suppose that what John could only delay, Henry's genius might have averted altogether.

* Jacqueline was daughter and heiress of William of Holland, and had been married already to Philip's cousin, John of Brabant.

To Henry the war was only a means to an end. It is true that he regarded the assertion of his title to the French Crown as a duty which his kingly dignity did not permit him to forego. It is possible also that he sought through an active foreign policy to find an antidote for domestic disorder. Certainly he was not blind to the commercial interests, which furnished his undertaking with a partial justification. But it was the relation of the war to his wider and nobler designs that preserved it under his direction from degenerating into an idle conquest. Henry's death-bed declaration, that he had entered upon the war from a desire to establish lasting peace, was not wholly unwarranted. The old dispute between England and France could not be settled by any patched-up truce; the internal divisions of the French made finality impossible and were a standing menace to the peace of Europe. The consolidation of France under the headship of the English King may well have appeared a necessary preliminary to the restoration of unity in Christendom. The restoration of that unity was itself no purposeless dream. The danger of Turkish invasion which had given the Crusades their political reason still continued; and the decline of the Byzantine Empire, whatever its causes, had deprived Europe of her ancient bulwark. The fourteenth century had witnessed the gradual rise of the Ottoman power, and at its close the fall of Constantinople seemed imminent. It was in vain that Sigismund, then King of Hungary, had obtained the help of a company of French knights under John, Count of

Nevers.* Sigismund and his allies were overthrown by Bajazet the Ottoman at Nicopolis, in 1396. However, the defeat of Bajazet by Timour the Tartar six years afterwards brought to the remains of the Eastern Empire a respite of fifty years. The temporary weakness of the Ottomans gave the Christian princes of Europe an opportunity of which they would have been wise to take advantage.

If Henry had lived to realise his project of a new Crusade, he would have accomplished much more than the satisfaction of a religious sentiment. Had he been successful, he would have checked, and perhaps might have stopped altogether, the progress of Turkish conquest in Europe. Such an achievement must have altered the whole course of subsequent history. The expansion of commerce, the revival of learning, the reformation of religion, the widening of the physical and intellectual horizon of Europe, all that is summed up in the idea of the Renaissance, must have come to pass, but by different methods and on different lines.

It is indeed probable that under such circumstances the change from Mediævalism would have been more gradual and less violent. But the progress of the world would not have been prevented. If Henry derived his principles from an ideal past, he was in no sense reactionary. His love of Learning, his taste for Art and Music, his zeal for Justice, his regard for the poor and weak, above all his sense of his position as a national and constitutional

* The future Duke of Burgundy, who has played so great a part in our history.

King, mark him out as one who looked forward to a happier future. He recognised to the full what England needed, and what, as her ruler, he had to accomplish. The establishment of a firm central government, which should guide the people for the people's good; the restoration of the Church to its old position as a truly national institution; the development of social prosperity at home, and of commerce abroad; all these were problems which presented themselves to Henry not less clearly than to his Tudor successors. That he should have dealt with them by different methods was a natural consequence of the different circumstances of his time. It was not yet evident that the old feudal nobility must perish before a new aristocracy could take its place. It still seemed possible that the English Church might recover her national independence, but avoid a breach with old tradition. No one could yet foresee that commerce was to turn from its ancient paths, or realise the unique position of England on the confines of the West. What Henry the Fifth could and did understand was the importance of a genuine national spirit both in politics and religion. He saw that England must be self-reliant and in a sense self-sufficient; he aimed rightly to secure her perfect independence, without isolating her from the general polity of Christian nations. He most of all excelled in his understanding of the importance to the ruler of the good-will of those whom he ruled. He knew that a national king must do more than merely personate the national feeling; he sought to govern not only for

the good of his people, but with their ready aid and sympathy.

The constitutional monarchy of the House of Lancaster was a great experiment. It came nearest to success during the reign of Henry the Fifth, whose genius enabled him both to use and control his Parliaments. The attempt was, however, premature, since the Commons were not yet fit to exercise the independence which they had in theory acquired. When the strong hand vanished, the system collapsed. Once more the strain of war exhausted the national resources and disorganised the civil government. The old elements of disunion reasserted themselves; feudal anarchy revived; the Church relapsed into luxurious sloth and subservience; the people, conscious of their own weakness, accepted gladly a new monarchy, until the season was ripe to revive the unforgotten tradition of national freedom.

Henry had a fine conception of his duty as King, but we cannot regret that his dream of a united Christendom and a new Crusade should have failed. The modern order was not to spring from any restoration of ancient ideals. The time was at hand for fresh faiths and fresh principles of government, for society to be remodelled on a new basis. Europe, however unconscious, stood at the parting of the ways and must enter upon her inheritance of progress by a rough and novel road. Henry, for all his genius, was not fitted by temperament to be her leader. He was the perfect pattern of the mediæval hero, born, as it were, out of due time, and instinct

with all the traditions of the past. His ideals were those of authority in Church and State, of a King who ruled a willing people as a trust from God, of a society based, not on equality, but on the mutual interchange of rights and obligations. It is a noble theory, the mediæval vision of a Golden Future that is yet far distant. Still, if Henry was the champion of a lost cause, nothing can rob him of the fame due to those who have spent their lives in the quest of a great ideal. A special charm and pathos must always attach to the memory of that princely hero who, through the splendour of his achievements, illumined with the rays of his glory the decline of the mediæval world.

SOLI DEO HONOR ET GLORIA



# INDEX


A

Abbeville, 138, 139, 353, 384
Aberystwith, 36, 37, 39, 46, 50, 56, 57, 64
Acton, Sir Roger, 83, 105
Admiralty, 187, 192
Agincourt, 127, 136, 137, 139, 143-154, 165, 167, 178, 188, 194, 198, 200, 202, 203, 263, 322, 341, 346, 348, 350, 373, 385, 389, 393, 396
Ailly, Pierre d', Cardinal and Bishop of Cambrai, 4, 261, 262, 265-267
Albany, Dukes of. *See* Stewart
Albret, Charles (I.) d', 137-139, 145, 148, 151, 154
Albret, Charles (II.) d', 322, 369
Alençon, 219-221, 227, 251-252, 352
Alençon, Bastard of, 317
Alençon, Jean, Duke of, 138, 148, 152, 154, 317
Alexander V., Pope, 5
Alien Priories, 349, 350
Almada, Dom John Velasquez d', 245, 255
Alyngton, William, 298
Amiens, 139, 322
Angers, 352
Anglesey, 30
Anjou, 213, 221, 251, 285, 346, 352
Appleton, R., 265, 269
Aquitaine, 20, 75, 76, 96, 115, 117, 369, 370, 373
Aquitaine, Duke of. *See* Henry V.
Aragon, 177, 262, 264, 267, 370
Archers, 44, 50, 56, 119, 126, 127, 135, 146, 150-152, 180, 191, 196-203, 348; herse of, 136 *note*, 146, 180, 199, 200; on ships, xx, 191
Argentan, 218
Armagnac, Bernard, Count of, 71, 163, 164, 167, 171, 172, 180-182, 200, 219, 220, 238-240
Armagnacs, 71, 72, 75, 76, 111-115, 138, 163, 174, 175, 195, 220, 230, 239, 240, 263, 299, 304, 305, 310, 317, 355, 394
Army, organisation of, 197-210; numbers of, 126, 127, 135, *note*, 196, 311, 341 *note*; ordinances for, 136, 209, 210; pay, 197, 198 *note*. *See also* Archers, Guns, Hoblers, Men-at-arms, Sieges
Arques, 136
Arras, 111, 114, 301, 302, 304, 345
Artas, Janico d', 242
Arthur, King, 2, 384
Arthur de Richemont. *See* Richemont
Artois, 138, 221
Arundel, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, 19, 61-63, 65-

Arundel—*Continued*
67, 70, 74, 77, 82, 83, 95, 98, 101–103, 110, 393
Arundel, Earl of. *See* Fitzalan, Thomas
Athies, 141
Avranches, 237, 357, 361

B

Babthorp, Sir Robert, 135, 197, 207, 243
Badby, John, 67, 68, 84, 393
Bangor, 54, 189
Bapaume, 138, 142
Bar, Edouard, Duke of, 138, 148, 154
Barbazan, Sire de, 299, 311, 313–317
Barcelona, 189
"Bardolph," 83, 90, 140
Bardolph, Thomas, Lord, 53–55
Baugé, 226, 347, 348, 352, 353, 366, 370
Bayeux, 217, 224, 230
Bayonne, 189, 369
Beachy Head, 184
Beauchamp, Richard, Earl of Warwick, 33, 47, 56, 97, 112, 127, 166, 168, 185, 215, 224, 226, 237, 243–246, 250, 251, 255, 281–284, 286, 301, 303, 306, 311, 322, 355, 358, 361, 378, 380, 381
Beauchamp, Richard, Earl of Worcester, 345, 358
Beaufort, 117
Beaufort, Edmund, 242, 348
Beaufort, Henry, Earl of Somerset, 98, 127
Beaufort, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, afterwards Cardinal, 15, 61, 63–65, 69, 73–77, 95, 97, 98, 102, 106, 115, 116, 120–122, 163, 271–276, 322, 341 *note*, 345, 380, 381 *note*
Beaufort, Jane, Queen of Scotland, 372
Beaufort, Joan, Countess of Westmoreland, 82, 97
Beaufort, John (I.), Earl of Somerset, 27, 74, 372
Beaufort, John (II.), Earl of Somerset, 348
Beaufort, Thomas, Earl of Dorset and Duke of Exeter, 61, 64–66, 74, 75, 97, 116, 133, 135, 179–181, 192, 226, 234, 235, 240–242, 254, 257, 279, 283, 296, 322, 325, 353, 355, 380
Beaufort-en-Vallée, 347
Beaugency, 354
Beauvais, 172–174, 249, 253, 353
Beauvoisis, 302, 361
Bec Hellouin, 235
Bedford, Duke of. *See* John
Benedict XIII., Pope, 5, 165, 259, 262, 267, 271
Berkeley, Thomas, Lord, 56
Berkhampstead, 31, 65, 69
Bernay, 235
Berri, Jean, Duke of, 71, 114, 115, 164, 167, 172
Berwick, 43
Béthencourt, 140
Beverley, 346, 348
Bigorre, 369, 370
Blackheath, 156, 169, 344, 385
Blanchard, Alain, 220, 238, 256, 394
Blanche, daughter of Henry IV., 96
Blanche-Taque, 137, 139
Blangy, 142
Bohemia, 259, 325, 364–366
Bohun, Mary de, 12, 14, 17
Bois de Vincennes, 318, 377, 380, 384, 388
Boniface VIII., Pope, 2
Bonnières, 142
Bordeaux, 179, 332, 369
Boucicault, Jean, 137–139, 145, 148, 154
Boulogne, 362, 384
Bourbon, Bastard of, 186
Bourbon, Jean, Duke of, 71, 138, 141, 148, 154, 194, 195, 327
Bourchier, Sir William, 226

Bourges, 306, 316
Bourges, Archbishop of, 112, 120, 121
Bouteiller, Sir Guy le, 238, 257, 279
Boves, 139
Brabant, Antony, Duke of, 152, 154
Bradwardyn, William, 208
Bramham Moor, 59
Bray, 292, 310
Brayllesford, Raulyn, 49
Brecon, 40
Brest, 185
Bretigny, Treaty of, 9, 116, 284, 373
Brie, 356
Bristol, 50, 56, 118, 246, 330, 333, 336, 338
Brittany, 55, 186, 213, 223, 285, 300, 322, 330–333
Brittany, Jeanne, Duchess of, 300
Brittany, John (IV.), Duke of, 14, 96
Brittany, John (V.), Duke of, 71, 138, 220, 249, 281, 300, 327, 370
Bromley, John, 140
Brynglas, 32
Bubwith, Nicholas, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 166
Buchan, Earl of. *See* Stewart, John
Builth, 31
Burgundy, 71, 302
Burgundy, John the Fearless, Duke of, 10, 60, 71–72, 111, 114, 115, 134, 138, 163, 173–175, 177, 195, 204, 219–221, 238–240, 247–254, 280–295, 299, 300, 316, 332, 399
Burgundy, Philip the Good, Duke of, 138, 295, 296, 300–303, 306–308, 310–313, 317–321, 353, 361, 372, 373, 375, 376, 378, 381, 397
Burton, 42
Butler, Sir Thomas, Prior of Kilmainham, 246, 248

C

Caboche, 111
Caen, 204, 214–218, 220, 223–225, 227, 230, 232, 234, 235, 239, 242, 252, 298
Caerleon, 50
Caerphilly, 50
Calais, 69, 76, 99, 112, 119, 127, 133–137, 141, 143, 149, 155, 168, 173–175, 179, 185, 194, 195, 232, 264, 269, 322, 353
Camber, The, 184
Cambrai, Bishop of. *See* Ailly, Pierre d'
Cambridge, Earl of. *See* Richard
Camoys, Thomas, Lord, 63, 98, 146
Canterbury, 156, 343, 385
Canterbury, Archbishops of. *See* Arundel, Thomas, and Chichele, Henry
Canterbury, Treaty of, 173, 176–178, 268, 269, 364, 368
Cany, 180
Cardiff, 50
Cardigan, 57
Carentan, 224
Carew, Sir Thomas, the "Baron of Carew," 41, 45, 56, 119, 190, 242, 331, 371
Carmarthen, 40, 46, 50, 57
Carpenter, John, 83
Castile, 177, 267, 299, 368, 370, 371
Catherine of Burgundy, 72, 114
Catherine of Denmark, 31
Catherine of Valois, Queen of England, 65, 112, 113, 251, 283–285, 301, 304, 307–310, 312, 320–322, 337, 343–346, 348, 351, 377, 378, 384, 387
Catrik, John, successively Bishop of St. David's, Lichfield and Coventry, and Exeter, 65, 72, 166, 174, 265, 272, 275–276
Caudebec, 232, 243–246, 279
Caux, Chef de, 127, 181
Chalons, 303
Chambrois, 224

Champagne, 362
Chancellors of England. *See* Arundel, Thomas; Beaufort, Henry and Thomas; Langley, Thomas
Charenton, 304, 306, 379
Charlemagne, 2
Charles V., King of France, 9
Charles VI., King of France, 9, 10, 46, 65, 71, 111, 112, 114, 122, 138, 163, 173, 219, 247, 252, 254, 283, 284, 291, 301, 303–307, 310, 312, 320, 321, 378, 384
Charles the Dauphin (afterwards Charles VII.), 219–221, 239, 248–251, 280–282, 285–288, 291–296, 298–300, 302–306, 308, 311, 312, 316, 317, 321, 322, 353, 354, 367, 368, 370, 371, 378
Charles of Orleans. *See* Orleans
Charolois, Philip, Count of. *See* Burgundy, Philip, Duke of
Chartres, 353, 354
Chateau Gaillard, or Les Andelys, 280, 296, 297
Chateau Renard, 312
Chatel, Tanneguy du, 239, 248, 282, 291–294, 299, 300
Chatillon, Ponce de, 290
Chaucer, Geoffrey, 82, 83, 330, 339, 349
Chaucer, Thomas, 349
Chaumont, Bertrand de, 317
Cherbourg, 224, 232, 235, 246, 298
Cheshire, 44, 45
Chester, 18, 19, 26, 27, 33, 42, 53
Chichele, Henry, Archbishop of Canterbury, 63, 82, 98, 109, 110, 112, 250, 251, 256, 274, 277, 283, 286, 323, 336, 345, 350, 393
Chichele, Sir Robert, 336
Church of England, 8, 99, 270, 274–277, 323, 340, 349, 350, 400
Cinque Ports, The, 65, 69, 343, 345
Clarence, Duchess of. *See* Holland, Margaret
Clarence, Duke of. *See* Thomas
Claydon, John, 393 *note*
Clement VII., Pope, 3, 5, 259
Clermont, 302
Clifford, Richard, Bishop of London, 102
Clifford, William, Lord Clifford, 47
Clux, Sir Hartank van, 166, 268, 366
Clyff, John, 208
Cobham, Lord. *See* Oldcastle, Sir John
Colnet, Nicholas, 208
Cologne, Archbishop of, 177
Colonna, Oddo. *See* Martin V.
Commerce, 183, 187, 195, 231, 297, 329–334
Compiègne, 302, 361, 378
Constable of England, 208, 214
Constables of France. *See* Albret, Charles (I.) d', Armagnac, Bernard, Count of
Constance, 99, 165, 175, 264, 269, 272
Constance, Council of, 165–167, 258–274, 364, 396
Constantinople, 375, 376, 398
Conway, 29
Corbeil, 312, 379
Corbie, 138, 140
Cornwall, Sir John, 98, 136, 141, 203, 224, 235–237, 302, 303, 310, 357
Cosne-sur-Loire, 379, 380
Cotentin, 75, 224, 361
Council, The Privy, 25, 27, 29, 30, 35, 36, 38, 39, 42, 49, 50, 62, 66, 68–70, 73–75, 119, 249, 341
Councils. *See* Constance, Pisa
Courtenay, Edward, Earl of Devon, 97, 127
Courtenay, Richard, Bishop of Norwich, 56, 65, 70, 83, 84, 114, 116, 120, 131
Courtfield, 13
Coutances, 224, 230

Coventry, 16, 61, 338, 346
Coyty, 54
Crecy, 5, 137, 193, 199
Crépy, 303
Creton, Jean, 17
Crusade, The, 77, 111, 260, 364, 375–376, 396, 398, 399, 401

D

Dammartin, 302
Dammartin, Count of, 148
Dartford, 169, 385
Dartmouth, 185, 330–333, 338
Dauphin. *See* Charles, John, Louis
Dauphiné, 299, 370
Dee, river, 36
Denbigh, 36
Denmark, 31, 332, 333
Deville, 245
Devonshire, Earl of. *See* Courtenay
Dieppe, 110, 136, 180, 279
Domfront, 224, 237, 243
Dorset, Earl of. *See* Beaufort, Thomas
Douglas, Archibald, Earl of, 34, 42, 45
Douglas, William, 303
Dover, 65, 120, 156, 168, 343, 351, 353, 385
Dreux, 281, 352, 354
Dryhurst, Henry, 19
Dryslwyn, 40
Dublin, 18
Durham, Bishop of. *See* Langley, Thomas

E

Edeyrnion, 37
Edmund, Duke of York, 20, 23
Edward the Confessor, 159, 226, 385
Edward I., 390
Edward III., 5, 28, 107, 134, 137, 166, 215, 275, 328, 329, 369
Edward the Black Prince, 69
Edward, Duke of York, 22, 23, 30, 46, 49, 56, 64, 75, 84, 97, 112, 120, 124, 136, 141, 142, 146, 153, 155, 199
Elizabeth of Lancaster, 98
Elmham, Thomas, 86, 282
Eltham, 78, 104, 156, 344
Elyot, Sir Thomas, 88
Emlyn, 40
Emperor, The. *See* Sigismund, Wenzel
Encre, 141
England, effect of Hundred Years' War, 5, 340, 401; growing sense of national unity, 6; political development and freedom, 6–8, 62, 68, 99, 107, 176, 201, 335; prosperity, 201, 334, 336, 337, 339, 342; commerce, 330–334; growth of manufactures, 329; vigorous town life, 334; population, 197, 336, 341; warlike spirit, 110, 116, 163; strain of war on resources, 161, 194, 249, 269, 340–342, 363, 367. *See also* Church of England
England, Kings of. *See* Edward, Henry, John, Richard, William
England, Queens of. *See* Catherine, Joanna, Isabella
English Channel, The, 10, 60, 96, 110, 179, 183, 185, 196
Eric, King of Denmark, 31, 32, 96
Erpingham, Sir Thomas, 63, 150
Eu, 137, 279
Eu, Count of, 148, 154
Evreux, 230, 235, 281
Exeter, 338
Exeter, Bishops of. *See* Catrik, John, Lacy, Edmund
Exeter, Duke of. *See* Beaufort, Thomas
Exmes, 219

F

Falaise, 220–224, 230, 252
"Falstaff, Sir John," 31, 91, 92

Fastolf, Sir John, 92, 197
Fauquemberg, Count of, 148, 154
Fécamp, 136, 180, 279
Ferrers of Chartley, Edmund, Lord, 197
Fitzalan, Thomas, Earl of Arundel, 33, 61, 72, 76, 77, 95, 97, 98
FitzHugh, Henry, Lord, 98, 255, 301
FitzWalter, Walter, Lord, 348
Flanders, 3, 71, 110–112, 174, 195, 221, 250, 280, 285, 331, 332, 339
Fleming, Richard, Bishop of Lincoln, 348, 366, 367
Flint, 18
Florence, 275, 334
Foix, Archambault de, Sire de Noailles, 294, 299, 369
Foix, Gaston de, Count of Longueville, 226, 289, 299, 369
Foix, John, Count of, 299, 322, 369, 370
Fontaine Lavaganne, 302
Forceville, 142
Forester, John, 264, 265, 269
Fortescue, Sir John, 201, 335, 339
France, effect of Hundred Years' War, 9, 10; political disorganisation, 10, 60, 128, 217, 218, 228, 231, 306; rival factions, 10, 60, 71, 111–114, 137, 163, 168, 172, 174, 194, 195, 219–221, 239, 240, 248–252, 264, 280–282, 288, 291, 295; civil wars, 71, 75, 111, 220, 239, 240, 249, 282, 303; relations with Papacy, 3–5, 164, 259, 262–264, 267, 273, 275, intrigues with Welsh, 32, 46, 54, 60; alliance with Scots, 186, 299, 367, 371, 372; alliance with Spanish Kingdoms, 177, 182, 201, 267, 299, 367, 370; alliance with Genoese, 177, 182, 368
France, Kings of. *See* Charles, John, Louis, Philip
France, Queen of. *See* Isabel
Fresnay-le-Vicomte, 303
Frévent, 142

G

Gam, David, 153
Gascoigne, Sir William, 87–91
Gascons, 137, 239, 289, 290, 353, 355, 369
Gascony, 110, 330–333
Gast, Sire Louis, 355, 360
Gaucourt, Raoul, Sire de, 129, 132, 133, 155, 171, 172, 183
Genoa, Republic of, 177, 186, 188, 280, 349, 368
Genoese, 171, 172, 182–186, 190, 196, 333, 349
Germans, 263, 268, 313
Germany, 4, 70, 164, 175, 177, 194, 205, 311, 364–368, 375
Gerson, Jean, 4, 262, 263
Giac, Dame de, 286, 292
Gisors, 280, 296, 353
Glamorgan, 40, 50, 51
Glendower, Owen, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34–37, 40–42, 46, 51–58, 60, 123, 162, 324
Gloucester, 55, 57, 64, 84
Gloucester, Dukes of. *See* Humphrey, Thomas of Woodstock
Godfrey of Bouillon, 2, 82, 375
Goodrich, 13
Gournay, 279
Gower, 40
Gravelines, 175
Graville, Jean, Sire de, 235–237
Greenfield, Henry, 276
Gregory XI., Pope, 3, 275
Gregory XII., Pope, 5, 165, 262
Greindor, Sir John, 51, 56, 83, 206
Grey, Sir John, Earl of Tankerville, 225, 226, 242, 281, 347, 348
Grey, Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, 25, 32
Grey, Richard, Lord Grey of Codnor, 98, 114, 116

Grey, Sir Thomas, of Heton, 123, 124, 226
Griffith ap David, 25
Griffith, son of Owen Glendower, 52
Grosmont, 51, 52, 56
Guienne, 60, 99, 140, 150
Guitry, Pierre, Sire de, 310
Gunpowder, 56, 117, 130, 203, 206
Guns, 56, 117, 130, 137, 148, 191, 203–206, 215, 236, 242, 244, 248, 312, 356–359; the King's guns, 118, 130; names of, 130, 204

H

Hall, Edward, 90, 109, 168
Hallam, Robert, Bishop of Salisbury, 98, 166, 260, 265, 268, 271, 272
Hangest, 139
Hanse, The, 177, 331, 332
Harcourt, 224
Harcourt, Jacques de, 353, 361
Hardyng, John, 74
Harfleur, 118, 127–136, 149, 155, 168, 171, 172, 179–185, 187, 191, 192, 196, 203, 204, 207, 209, 212, 230–232, 242, 298, 394
Harlech, 36, 37, 39, 46, 50, 58
Hartank van Clux. *See* Clux
Haule, or Hawley, John, 331
Haverford West, 50
Henry IV., 7, 10, 12–14, 16–30, 32–34, 39–49, 52–68, 70–79, 84, 85, 88, 91, 188, 202, 331, 337, 375, 381; constitutional King, 7, 22, 60, 68; his difficulties, 21–22, 34, 59–61, 79; his suggested abdication, 63, 73
Henry V.:
*Historical Sequence of Career:*
Birth, 12; early years, 14; education, 15, 82, 83; at Oxford, 15, 70, 83; friendship with Richard II., 16, 100; in Ireland, 17–19; knighted, 17; created Prince of Wales, 19; proposals for marriage, 14, 23, 31, 63, 72; government of Wales, 26, 29, 30, 35–58, 64; at battle of Shrewsbury, 43–44; in Scotland, 54; political rivalry with Archbishop Arundel, 61, 62, 65, 66, 74; political opposition to his father, 61, 63, 72–78, 84, 85; governs England as minister, 66–74.
Succeeds to the Throne, 94; coronation, 95; suppresses Lollard insurrection, 104–106; receives French Embassy at Winchester, 120–122; first invasion of France, 126; takes Harfleur, 132; resolves to march to Calais, 134; at Agincourt, 146–154; enters London in triumph, 158, 159; receives Sigismund in England, 169–173; attends Conference at Calais, 174–176; lands for the second time in Normandy, 212; besieges Caen, 214–217; marches on Alençon, 219; takes Falaise, 221; organises government of Normandy, 217, 218, 224–233, 278, 297; opens campaign of 1418, 235; takes Pont de l'Arche, 236; besieges Rouen, 241; receives surrender of Rouen, 254–257; meets Burgundy in Conference at Meulan, 283–286; captures Gisors and Meulan. 296; goes to Rouen, 297; concludes agreement with Philip of Burgundy, 302; ratifies Treaty of Troyes, 307; marries Catherine of Valois, 308; Regent and Heir of France, 309; takes

Henry V.—*Continued*
Sens and Montereau, 310; besieges Melun, 311–316; fights with Barbazan in single combat, 315; quarrels with L'Isle Adam, 319; enters Paris in triumph, 320; holds Norman Parliament at Rouen, 322; returns to England, 343; progress through England, 346; leaves England for the last time, 351; takes Dreux, 354; invades Orleannais, 354; besieges Meaux, 355; diplomatic schemes, 363–372; contemplates a new Crusade, 374; with Catherine at Paris, 378; goes to relief of Cosne, 379; returns ill to Bois de Vincennes, 379; last days, 380; death, 382; funeral procession, 384, 385; burial at Westminster, 385; his tomb, 386; epitaph, 387, 388
*Public Qualities:*
Anxiety for good government, 107, 108, 163, 218, 231, 323, 391; administrative zeal, 69, 83, 298, 395; attention to details, 160, 223, 395; aims and ideals, 10, 270, 375, 398–402
Domestic policy, 69, 95, 100, 107, 162, 335, 400; a national and constitutional King, 7, 107, 176, 401; skill in handling Parliament, 99, 107, 401; commercial policy, 177, 188, 195, 250, 332
Ecclesiastical policy, 260, 268–270, 274–277, 340, 393; orthodoxy, 68, 83, 84, 87, 92, 270, 274; relations with Lollardy, 62, 66–68, 92, 101–106, 270, 393; relations with Oldcastle, 31, 91, 92, 101–103, 326; religious foundations, 349, 350
Foreign policy, 72, 75, 110–114, 161, 166, 176–178, 280, 340, 363–372; skill in diplomacy, 115, 176–178, 221, 249, 372. Policy in France, claim to French Crown, 109–111, 115, 285, 373; contemplates permanent conquest, 134, 161, 373, 374; seeks to rule lawfully, 217, 224–226
Generalship, 131, 134, 160, 212, 213, 219–221, 235, 241, 243, 290, 313, 356; strict discipline, 136, 139, 140, 144, 218, 395
Military administration, 118, 202, 205–210
Naval administration, 187–193
*Personal Characteristics:*
Appearance, 81; dress, 14, 19, 146, 159, 257; badges and cognisances, 191, 257; helmet and sword, 132, 146, 159, 386; taste for literature, 82, 83, 399; his books, xix, 82; love of music, 14, 82, 86, 313, 399; love of sport, 81, 82
Popularity, 85, 162, 340, 383, 389, 391; attracts friendship, 84, 340, 372, 394; loyalty to friends, 84, 390; consideration for others, 390
Confidence in himself and his rights, 94, 110, 125, 142, 382, 393; justice, 84, 108, 124, 229, 317, 390; severity, 218, 310, 317, 360, 390, 393; mercy, 84, 106, 253, 391; courage, 104, 152, 160, 314, 315; steadfastness in adversity, 348, 392; modesty, 84, 158, 349; prudence, 104, 390; piety, 92, 128, 133, 142, 146, 159, 196, 229, 257, 382, 383, 392
Popular traditions and legends relating to, 78, 80, 81,

Henry V.—*Continued*
85–93; story of Judge Gascoigne, 87–91; of Falstaff, 31, 91, 92
Letters and despatches, 36, 38, 47–49, 51, 132, 176, 216, 230, 237, 240, 245, 250, 275, 326, 367
Sayings and speeches, 18, 44, 78, 113, 133, 134, 140–142, 149, 150, 254, 275, 286, 310, 313, 317, 319, 361, 381, 382, 383, 392, 393
Henry VI., 377, 380, 387
Henry VII., 387
Hereford, 33, 40, 46, 47, 51, 52, 57
Hereford, Duke of. *See* Henry IV.
Hereford, Earls of, 12
Herefordshire, 45, 48, 50, 58, 324
Hertford, 14
Hesdin, 384
Higham Ferrers, 39, 42
Hoblers, 119, 203
Hoccleve, Thomas, 68, 69, 82, 83, 131, 204, 375 *note*
Holinshed, Raphael, 90, 168
Holland, 118, 190
Holland, Duke of. *See* William
Holland, John (I.), Earl of Huntingdon, 22, 23, 98
Holland, John (II.), Earl of Huntingdon, 98, 128, 136, 162, 183, 185, 186, 189, 210, 215, 224, 237, 242, 243, 289, 290, 302, 303, 306, 311, 341, 347, 348
Holland, Margaret, Countess of Somerset, and Duchess of Clarence, 74, 307
Holland, Thomas, Earl of Kent, 22, 23
Homildon Hill, 33
Honfleur, 184, 213, 232, 279
Hotspur. *See* Percy, Sir Henry
Hull, 207, 330, 332, 333, 336
Humphrey of Gloucester (*d.* 1400), 17, 18
Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, 96, 104, 112, 120, 136, 152, 168, 175, 215, 217, 224, 234, 246, 280, 297, 328, 345, 353, 377, 380, 381, 397
Hungary, 164, 364, 375
Hungerford, Sir Walter, 142, 166, 224, 255, 301, 359
Huntingdon, Earls of. *See* Holland
Hus, John, 259, 261, 262
Hussites, 365

I

Ireland, 17, 19, 64, 96, 99, 246, 330
Irish, 32, 246–248, 360
Isabel of Bavaria, Queen of France, 219, 220, 240, 283, 284, 287, 288, 290, 295, 300, 301, 304, 307–310, 312, 320
Isabella of Valois, Queen of England, 9, 23, 24
Italians, 118, 260, 263, 334
Italy, 4, 164, 368
Iton, river, 235
Ivry, 280, 282, 322

J

Jacqueline of Bavaria, 163, 397
James I., King of Scotland, 60, 119, 162, 311, 322, 324, 345, 349, 371, 372, 384
Jerusalem, 271, 375, 376, 382
Joanna of Naples, 280, 368
Joanna of Navarre, Queen of England, 96, 327, 328, 381
John, Duke of Bedford, 70, 87, 104, 112, 120, 169, 184, 185, 192, 207, 280, 297, 306, 310, 311, 320–323, 325, 328, 368, 377, 380, 381, 384, 396, 397; Regent of England, 119, 295, 323, 351; character, 96, 397
John the Dauphin, 163, 175, 195, 219, 220
John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy. *See* Burgundy

John, King of England, 227
John II., King of France, 117
John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, 12, 14, 16
John XXIII., Pope, 5, 164, 165, 260–262, 266
John, King of Portugal, 245, 371
Jourdain, Jean de, 239

K

Kempe, John, 301
Kenilworth, 14, 57, 64, 113, 324,
Kennington, 69
Kent, 172, 207, 339, 343
Kent, Earl of. *See* Holland, Thomas
Kidwelly, 40, 50
Kilmainham, Prior of. *See* Butler, Sir Thomas
Kingston, 95
Knighton, 32
Knolles, Sir Robert, 134
Knolles, or Knowles, Sir Thomas, 336
Kyghley, Sir Richard, 153
Kyme, Earl of. *See* Umfraville, Sir Gilbert
Kyngeston, Richard, 40, 47

L

Lacy, Edmund, Bishop of Exeter, 208
Ladislas, King of Naples, 164
Lagny-sur-Marne, 304, 355
La Hire, Etienne de Vignolles, 353
La Hogue, 185, 234
L'Aigle, 219
Lairé, Robert de, 293
Lambeth, 169
Lancaster, Duchy of, 20
Lancaster, Dukes of. *See* Henry IV., Henry V., John of Gaunt
Lancaster, House of, 10, 12, 16, 19, 324, 397, 401
Langley, 21, 100
Langley, Thomas, Bishop of Durham, 63, 98, 112, 114, 116, 120, 326, 348
Languedoc, 299, 369, 370
Lannoi, Sir Gilbert de, 376
Laonnais, 303
La Roche Guyon, 280
La Rochelle, 299, 317
Leche, Sir Philip, 242, 312
Leeds, 172, 183
Leicester, 14, 106, 109, 114, 346
Le Mans, 199, 219, 303
Les Andelys. *See* Château Gaillard
Lezarde, river, 129, 130
Lichfield, 42, 49
Lichfield, Bishop of. *See* Catrik, John
Liége, 206
Lillebonne, 279
Limousin, 121
Lincoln, 348
Lincoln, Bishop of. *See* Fleming, Richard
Lisieux, 218, 235
L'Isle Adam, Jean de Villiers, Sire de, 239, 289, 290, 319, 320
Livet, Robert de, 238, 256
Livius de Frulovisiis, Titus, 196
Llampadarn. *See* Aberystwith
Llandeilo-fawr, 40
Llandovery, 40
Llanstephan, 40, 50
Loire, river, 304, 347, 354, 362
Lollards, 60, 62, 65–68, 92, 100–106, 124, 323–326, 393
Lollardy, 8, 9, 31, 70, 270, 324
London, 14, 18, 19, 22–24, 34, 41, 46, 54, 64, 65, 69, 75, 76, 87, 94, 104, 105, 112–114, 118, 120, 122, 155–159, 168, 169, 183, 196, 262, 308, 324, 325, 330, 332, 336–339, 341, 342, 344–346, 349, 385; bishop of, *see* Clifford, Richard; citizens of, 23, 46, 120, 156, 169, 207, 246, 336, 385; mayor of, 120, 155, 156, 159, 169, 196, 216, 237, 245, 336, 345, 385
Longe, John, 331

Longny, Maréchal de, 181
Longueville, Count or Earl of. *See* Foix, Gaston de
Louis IX., King of France, 225, 305
Louis of Anjou, King of Sicily, 138, 219, 221
Louis of Bavaria, Count Palatine of the Rhine, 96, 269, 311, 313, 364, 365
Louis the Dauphin, 111, 113–116, 128, 135, 138, 163
Louis of Orleans. *See* Orleans, Louis, Duke of
Louthe, John, 206
Louvet, Jean, President of Provence, 248, 291, 299
Louviers, 235
Luttrell, Sir Hugh, 228
Luxembourg, Jean de, 302, 319, 361
Lydgate, John, 83
Lynn, 118, 330, 338
Lyons, 167, 299

M

MacMorrogh, 17
Maine, 210, 219, 221, 251, 285, 303, 346, 352, 362
Maisoncelles, 143, 144, 154, 198
Malbon, William, 57
Mantes, 192, 209, 276, 279, 283, 287–289, 296, 297, 301, 306, 327
March, Earl of. *See* Mortimer, Edmund
March (in Scotland), George Dunbar, Earl of, 44
Marches of Scotland, 70, 96, 99, 119, 127, 341 *note*
Marches of Wales, 25, 26, 35, 38–41, 45, 49, 50, 54, 55, 99, 341 *note*
Marie of Anjou, 219
Marne, river, 306, 355, 356, 359
Marshal, Earl. *See* Mowbray
Marshal, The Earl, his office, 208, 209
Marshals of France. *See* Boucicault, L'Isle Adam, Longny, Rieux, Umfraville
Martin V., Pope, 251, 273–277, 350, 364, 371
Mauduyt, Nicholas, 118
Mauny, Oliver, Sire de, 222, 223, 361
Mayence, 280
Meaux, 203, 205, 355–364, 366, 369, 377
Melun, 286, 311–319, 322, 355, 356, 365, 375
Men-at-arms, 50, 56, 119, 126, 127, 135, 146, 148, 151, 190, 196–197, 200, 202, 351
Merbury, Nicholas, 117, 206
Merioneth, 37
Meulan, 283–288, 296, 297, 373
Milan, Duke of, 368
Monmouth, 13, 51, 54, 377
Mons-en-Vimeu, 361
Montacute, John de, Earl of Salisbury, 18, 22, 23, 98
Montacute, Thomas de, Earl of Salisbury, 98, 114, 119, 210, 215, 226, 228, 242, 244, 250, 255, 279, 303, 348, 352, 353, 357, 361, 397
Montereau, 292–294, 298–300, 310, 316, 317, 326, 360
Montgomery, 36, 325
Montivilliers, 130, 136, 279
Montreuil, 353
Mont St. Michel, 280, 362
Morgan, Philip, Bishop of Worcester, 227, 269 276, 298, 301
Morgannoc, 50, 51
Morstede, Thomas, 208
Mortimer, Anne, 97
Mortimer, Edmund, Earl of March, 22, 30, 32, 97, 100, 101, 104, 122–124, 162, 186, 213, 228, 234, 322, 355
Mortimer, Sir Edmund, 32, 34, 53, 58
Mortimer, Hugh, 63, 72, 114
Mouchy la Gache, 141
Moulineaux, 245
Mowbray, John (I.) de, Duke of Norfolk, 16

Mowbray, John (II.) de, Earl Marshal and Earl of Nottingham, 97, 100, 133, 215, 242
Mowbray, Thomas de, Earl Marshal and Earl of Nottingham, 48, 53, 100
Murdach, Duke of Albany. *See* Stewart

N

Naples, Kings and Queens of. *See* Ladislas, Joanna.
Navy, The Royal, 187–193; ordinances for, 191, 192. *See also* Admiralty, Ships
Nemours, 355
Nesle, 140
Nesle, Guy de, Sire d'Offemont, 357
Nether Went, 50, 51
Netter of Walden, Thomas, 83, 92, 103, 365, 382
Nevers, Count of, 138, 148, 154
Neville, John, 242
Neville, Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, 97, 98, 127, 142, 197, 242
Newport, 50
Newport, William, 51
Nicopolis, 399
Noailles, Sire de. *See* Foix, Archambault de
Nogent, 117, 304
Norfolk, 341
Norfolk, Duke of. *See* Mowbray, John (I.) de
Normandy, 75, 129, 134, 180, 209, 212, 213, 218, 223, 250, 278, 280, 284, 304, 310, 321, 322, 339, 340, 352–354, 361, 362, 373, 380, 381; English government of, 218, 225–233, 278–279, 297, 298, 322; bailiffs, 227, 298; chancellor, 228, 298; exchequer, 227, 278; treasurer, 227, 298; English earldoms in, 226, 322; English colonies in, 232, 298
Northumberland, 24
Northumberland, Earls of. *See* Percy
Norwich, 118, 338
Nottingham, Earls of. *See* Mowbray
Nully l'Evesque, 235

O

Offemont, Sire d'. *See* Nesle, Guy de
Ofort, John, 309
Oise, river, 288
Oldcastle, Sir John, 31, 56, 66, 72, 83, 84, 91, 92, 98, 101–106, 124, 162, 323–326, 329, 393
Orange, Louis de Chalons, Prince of, 319
Orival, 245
Orleannais, 354, 362
Orleans, 354, 397
Orleans, Charles, Duke of, 71, 72, 76, 138, 141, 148, 154, 194, 316, 326, 327, 333 *note*, 346, 381
Orleans, Louis, Duke of, 10, 60, 71, 263
Orsini, Cardinal, 251, 272
Ospringe, 385
Oswestry, 25
Over Went, 50, 51
Owen Glendower. *See* Glendower
Owen of Wales, 28
Oxford, 15, 101
Oxford, Earl of. *See* Vere, Richard de
Oxford, University of, 15, 28, 56, 65, 70, 83, 84, 101, 350

P

Papacy, The, 2–5, 165, 230, 259–261, 267, 270
Paris, 46, 71, 72, 110–114, 120, 122, 167, 168, 171, 174, 177, 181, 213, 214, 220, 230, 235, 239, 240, 247, 248, 262, 286, 288, 290, 291, 295–297, 301, 302, 305, 306, 308, 312, 316–321, 353–355, 360, 377–380, 383, 384, 388

Paris, University of, 4, 247, 262
Parliament, 5, 68, 69, 76, 94, 99, 107, 188, 270, 274, 276, 331, 335, 401 ; of **1399,** 18–20, 22 ; of **1400,** 28; of Coventry, **1404,** 61 ; of **1406,** 55, 61–63 ; of Gloucester, **1407,** 64 ; of **1410,** 66–68 ; of **1411,** 73 ; of **1413,** 99 ; of Leicester, **1414,** 106–110, 114, 329; of November, **1414,** 115, 116 ; of **1415,** 163 ; of March, **1416,** 163, 169 ; of October, **1416,** 176 ; of December, **1417,** 325, 328, 329 ; of October, **1419,** 328 ; of December, **1420,** 328, 343 ; of May, **1421,** 348–351.
Patrington, Stephen, successively Bishop of St. David's and Chichester, 83
Pavilly, Eustace de, 247
Pay, Harry, 188, 331
Payne, Peter, 325
Payne, Thomas, 324
Pelham, Sir John, 75, 95
Pembroke, 41
Penthièvre, Oliver de Blois, Count of, 300
Percy, House of, 7, 32, 61, 123
Percy, Sir Henry (Hotspur), 26, 27, 29, 30, 32–34, 41–45, 61, 98, 100, 162
Percy, Henry, 1st Earl of Northumberland, 33, 41, 42, 45, 47, 53–55, 59, 61
Percy, Henry, 2nd Earl of Northumberland, 98, 100, 123, 162, 197
Percy, Thomas, Earl of Worcester, 30, 35, 41–43, 45
Peronne, 138, 141
Perpignan, 165, 167, 262
Pershore, 64, 67
Petit, Jean, 263
Philip the Good. *See* Burgundy, Philip, Duke of
Philip IV. of France, 3
Philip VI. of France, 226
Philippa, daughter of Henry IV., 31, 96
Phillip, Sir William, 225
Picardy, 71, 112, 138, 150, 353, 361
Piracy, 110, 188, 231, 331, 332
Pisa, Council of, 5, 60, 70, 98
"Poins," 83
Poissy, 297, 301
Poitiers, 5, 138, 193, 200, 248, 299
Poitou, 300
Poland, 364, 365
Pole, Michael de la, 2nd Earl of Suffolk, 97, 131
Pole, Michael de la, 3rd Earl of Suffolk, 153, 155
Pole, Sir Walter de la, 370
Pole, William de la, 4th Earl of Suffolk, 226, 228, 354, 357, 361
Pont de l'Arche, 203, 235–237, 240, 241, 243, 251, 252
Pontefract, 47, 56, 326, 346
Pontoise, 72, 239, 249, 283, 284, 288–291, 295, 306, 384
Poole, 188, 331
Popes. *See* Alexander, Benedict, Boniface, Clement, Gregory, John, Martin, Urban
Porchester, 126
Porter, Sir William, 242
Portland, Isle of, 183
Portsmouth, 184
Portugal, 177, 333, 371
Portugal, King of. *See* John
Pouilly-le-Fort, 286, 288, 291
Powys, 37, 325
Provins, 116, 117, 281, 282, 304

Q

"Quickly," Dame, 87
Quillebœuf, 245

R

Ravenspur, 18, 21
Redmayne, Robert, 90, 109
Reformation, The, 259–261, 271
Rheims, 303
Rheims, Archbishop of, 168, 171, 172, 174

Rhys ap Gruffyd, 56
Richard II., King of England, 7, 9, 10, 16–19, 21–24, 98, 100, 101, 104, 107, 202, 330, 336, 340; the pseudo-Richard, the "mammet of Scotland," 21, 62, 104, 123, 324, 326
Richard, Earl of Cambridge, 48, 97, 123, 142, 324
Richemont, Arthur de, 138, 148, 154, 226, 300, 322, 327, 370, 372
Rieux, Pierre, Maréchal de, 303
Robsart, Sir John, 224, 225, 255
Robsart, Sir Lewis, 225, 303
Rochester, 169, 385
Roos of Hamlake, John, Lord, 303, 348
Rouen, 132, 137, 138, 180, 204, 207, 212–214, 220, 223–225, 228, 232, 235, 237–257, 278–281, 296–298, 301, 306, 321, 322, 369, 384, 395
Roumes, John, 360
Rudborne, Thomas, 83
Rugles, 219
Rutland, Earl of. *See* Edward, Duke of York
Rye, 184, 331

S

St. Catherine's (Rouen), 241, 242, 244
St. Cloud, 72
St. David's, Bishops of. *See* Catrik, John; Chichele, Henry, and Patrington Stephen
St. Denis, 249, 290, 306, 384
St. Florentin, 309
St. Germain, 297, 301
St. Lo, 224
St. Paul's (London), 159, 169, 196, 385
St. Pol, Philip, Count of, 300
St. Quentin, 303
St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte, 224
Salisbury, Bishop of. *See* Hallam, Robert
Salisbury, Earls of, *See* Montacute
Sandwich, 118
Savage, Sir Arnold, 65
Savoisy, Henry, Archbishop of Sens, 308, 310
Savoy, Duke of, 370
Scarborough, 333
Schaffhausen, 261
Schism, The Great, 3, 4, 60, 70, 164, 165, 259, 270, 275
Scotland, 3, 21, 22, 24, 25, 34, 47, 54, 60, 98, 99, 101, 123, 162, 275, 299, 326, 332, 363, 367, 368, 371, 372
Scotland, King of. *See* James
Scotland, Regents of. *See* Stewart
Scots, 24, 32, 33, 42, 60, 104, 119, 186, 324–326, 331, 371; in France, 186, 201, 299, 311, 316, 347, 356, 360
Scrope, Henry, Lord le, 74, 98, 114, 123, 124, 324, 381
Scrope, Richard le, Archbishop of York, 53, 54, 61, 91, 100
Seez, 218, 230
Seine, river, 127, 129, 182, 184, 207, 212, 213, 235, 236, 241–243, 245, 279, 283, 296, 311, 319, 379
Sellowe, Robert, 118
Senlis, 378
Sens, 309, 310
Sens, Archbishop of. *See* Savoisy, Henry
Sevenoke, Sir William, 336
Shakespeare, 18, 26, 31, 33, 43, 44, 67, 79, 82, 83, 87, 90–92, 109, 140, 142, 154, 156, 389
Sheen, 350
Ships, 118, 126, 182–191, 213, 215, 245, 290, 331–333; crews of, 190; names of, 126, 185, 188, 191, 332, 333
Shipton Moor, 53
Shrewsbury, 26, 28, 30, 33, 35–37, 41–46, 97, 346
Shropshire, 45, 46
Sicily, King of. *See* Louis of Anjou

Sicily, Queen of. *See* Yolande
Sieges: Aberystwith, 56, 57; Caen, 214–217; Dreux, 354; Falaise, 221–223; Harfleur, 127–136; Meaux, 355–360; Melun, 311–316; Montereau, 310; Rouen, 234–257; siege operations, 204–206
Sigismund, Emperor, 164–179, 181–184, 194, 195, 261–264, 324, 364–368, 370, 372, 375, 398; in England, 168–173, 184; at Council of Constance, 164, 264–273
Sluys, 185, 193
Soissons, 282, 394
Somer, Henry, 83
Somerset, Earls of. *See* Beaufort, Henry, John
Somme, river, 137–139, 141, 203
Southampton, 118, 119, 122, 124, 126, 172, 183, 186, 188, 189, 196
Southampton Water, 126, 183, 184, 212
Spain, 3, 164, 177, 182, 186, 264, 267, 275, 330–334, 363, 370, 371
Springge, Sir Edmund, 216, 217
Stafford, Edmund, Earl of, 33, 43, 45
Stafford, Sir Hugh, 225
Stafford, Humphrey, Earl of, 98, 127
Stewart, John, Earl of Buchan, 299, 347
Stewart, Murdach, Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland, 162, 372
Stewart, Robert, Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland, 162, 299, 326, 371, 372
Stokes, John, 165, 370
Sudbury, 118
Suffolk, Earls of. *See* Pole

T

Talbot, Sir Gilbert, 58, 162, 197
Talbot, John, 51, 58
Tankerville, Earl of. *See* Grey, Sir John
Tanneguy du Chatel. *See* Chatel
Taylor, William, 393
Tenby, 50
Ternoise, river, 142
Teutonic Knights, The, 365
Thomas, Duke of Clarence, 13, 64, 74–76, 87, 92, 95, 96, 104, 112, 119, 120, 124, 129, 130, 135, 169, 187, 197, 208, 214–216 224, 235, 236, 241, 279 291, 306, 311, 317, 321, 322, 332, 347, 348, 352
Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, 17, 134
Tibouville, La Rivière de, 224
Timour, 399
Tiptoft, Sir John, 84, 85, 176, 194, 219, 227, 268, 271, 301, 369
Toulouse, 299
Touques, 212–214, 221
Touraine, 251, 285
Tours, 220
Tower of London, 19, 95, 103, 325, 327, 344
Tramecourt, 148
Treaties. *See* Bretigny, Canterbury, Troyes
Tremblay, 302
Treves, 280
Trim, 18
Troyes, 290–292, 295, 300, 303, 304, 306–309
Troyes, Treaty of, 307, 308, 327, 349, 366, 367, 369
Tudor Kings, 387, 400
Tudor, Sir Owen, 387 *note*
Tudor, William ap, 29
Turks, 375, 398, 399
Tutbury, 14, 32, 55
Tyby, Jenkin, 32
Tyne, river, 118

U

Ulm, 272
Umfraville, Sir Gilbert, titular Earl of Kyme, 72, 128, 132,

Umfraville—*Continued*
136, 141, 185, 215, 226, 242, 253–255, 281, 303, 322, 347, 348
Umfraville, Sir Robert, 72
Urban V., Pope, 3
Urban VI., Pope, 3, 4, 259
Ursins, Jean Juvenal des, 287, 305, 314
Ursins, Louis Juvenal des, 314
Usk, 50–52

V

Valence, Bishop of, 292
Valenciennes, 175
Valmont, 180, 199, 200
Valois, 303, 361
Vaughan, Howel, 29
Vaurus, Bastard of, 355, 356, 360, 394
Vaurus, Denis de, 360
Venice, 177, 334
Vere, Richard de, Earl of Oxford, 98, 136
Vermandois, 303
Verneuil, 219
Vernon, 279, 282
Villeneuve-le-Roi, 309, 355
Vire, 224

W

Walden, Thomas Netter of. *See* Netter
Wales, 24–42, 46, 49–58, 64, 65, 70, 76, 99, 119, 123
Wales, Prince of. *See* Henry V.
Walsingham, Thomas, 86
Waring, Johanna, 14
Warwick, Earl of. *See* Beauchamp, Richard
Waterford, 17, 246
Waterton, John de, 37, 208
Waterton, Robert, 341
Welsh, 10, 24, 28, 46–48, 50, 104, 324
Wenzel, Emperor, 2, 164
Westminster, 18, 19, 55, 61, 76, 94, 95, 105, 115, 119, 155, 159, 169, 196, 321, 345, 349, 385
Westminster Abbey, 19, 78, 95, 100, 159, 345, 385–387
Westminster Hall, 95, 159, 345
Westmoreland, Countess of. *See* Beaufort, Joan
Westmoreland, Earl of. *See* Neville, Ralph
Whittington, Sir Richard, 118, 329, 337, 338, 386
Wight, Isle of, 127, 173, 183, 184
William the Conqueror, 214, 217, 225, 226
William of Bavaria, Duke of Holland, 163, 170, 171, 175, 397
Winchelsea, 118
Winchester, 120
Winchester, Bishop of. *See* Beaufort, Henry
Windsor, 13, 22, 23, 52, 102, 170, 377
Wolman, Benedict, 324
Worcester, 46–49, 52, 57
Worcester, Earls of. *See* Beauchamp, Richard, and Percy, Thomas
Wycliffe, John, 8, 65, 259, 261

Y

Yolande, Queen of Sicily, 220
Yonge, Griffith, 53
York, 53, 338, 346, 348
York, Archbishop of. *See* Scrope, Richard le
York, Dukes of. *See* Edmund, Edward
Yorkshire, 45, 325

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